



### Most Common Causes of Tooth Decay

There is usually not one single reason for decay but rather a few factors that can cause a cavity. The following are some of the more common risk factors:

- **Frequent Snacking:** Children who nibble and graze throughout the day have more acid exposures, which causes breakdown of tooth enamel even if they are snacking on healthy foods. Try to have regular meals and limit the number of snack times to only one or two between meals. This is generally the biggest reason a child gets a cavity.
- **Poor Brushing and Flossing:** Teeth coated in plaque will decay.
- **Snacking on Sticky Foods:** If a snack is sticky, it will stay in their mouth for hours. Foods that dissolve easily will be less cavity-promoting. Avoid refined sugars and starches by staying as close to nature as possible.
- **Juices, Sodas and Sports Drinks:** These are loaded with sugar and highly acidic.
- **No Fluoride Exposure:** Daily fluoride is beneficial against cavities. This exposure can be obtained by drinking fluoridated water and using toothpastes, gels, or rinses. Check your filter to make sure it is not a reverse-osmosis filtration system, which removes fluoride from your tap water. Should your child be at high-risk for decay, Dr. Ozzie can recommend prescription-strength toothpastes and gels.