

Tooth decay
A concerning
childhood epidemic

Dental Injury
A step towards
prevention

Oral cancer
Early detection
is key

**MEDIA
PLANET**

September 2011

ORAL HEALTH



TO GREATER ORAL
HEALTH



ATTAINING A CELEBRITY SMILE

Mario Lopez shares his secrets to achieving a smile worthy of Hollywood

PHOTO: EXTRA



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CHALLENGES



TIP

1

BRUSH YOUR
TEETH FOR TWO
MINUTES OR
LONGER

Proper oral care begins when we are young. Those habits we learn as children can help us throughout our entire lives as we work to ward off and prevent oral problems.

Hygiene and your overall health

When patients visit the dentist for a routine checkup, they receive not only a cleaning of the gums and teeth from the hygienist, but also a complete examination of the mouth by the dentist. By performing a thorough examination of the mouth, it is possible to determine if my patients have been keeping their mouths healthy in between dental appointments. I can tell if they are regularly brushing and flossing. I also can get a good indication of their overall health status and whether or not they may suffer from certain diseases or show signs of oral cancer.

You see, oral health is so much more than just brushing and flossing. So many areas of the body are affected by your oral health, and many diseases and conditions, including diabetes and heart disease, can

even be detected during a routine checkup. The good news is that proper oral care can help diagnose many health conditions and even help prevent oral health problems.

Starting young

And proper oral care begins when we are young. Those habits we learn as children can help us throughout our entire lives as we work to ward off and prevent oral problems, from the smallest cavity to gum disease and gingivitis. Teaching children good oral health habits from an early age provides them with the lifelong skills to care for their mouths.

Unfortunately, though, many people have lost these skills along the way, whether due to indifference or busy lifestyles. Our daily regimen becomes a quick, 30-second brush, or flossing, only if you remember. But this is not enough to combat the bacteria that attack your mouth every day. Given all of the oral

“You can avoid costly oral issues by just taking the time to be kind to your teeth...”



Howard R. Gamble, DMD, FAGD
2011-2012 President, Academy of General Dentistry

and overall health implications, isn't it worth it to commit just a little more time to your oral hygiene?

I beg patients to be proactive when it comes to their oral health. Use a kitchen timer to spend a few more minutes brushing, or, if you can, purchase an electric toothbrush that has a two-minute timer built in. Make it a priority to floss each night before bedtime. You can avoid costly oral issues by just taking the time to be kind to your teeth—saving your wallet, and your health, a lot of stress down the road.

Read the rest of the articles in this special section, which focus on topics that range from how sour candies affect teeth, to how tooth decay is a childhood epidemic. Change your own life by using these tips and make oral health a priority for you and your loved ones.

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WE RECOMMEND



America's Toothfairy
Fern Ingber shares tips for your children's oral health

PAGE 5

“Preventive dental care is an essential element to ensuring a child's overall health and ability to thrive...”

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NEWS

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **more than half of the 7 million** sports and recreation-related injuries that occur each year are sustained by those between five and 24 years old.

Protect your pearly whites

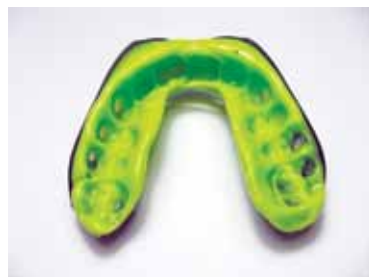
In observance of National Childhood Injury Prevention Week earlier this month, the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) encourages children who play contact sports to use a protective mouthguard to avoid mouth and facial injury.

“Sometimes parents do not understand the risk for serious dental injuries that can occur in their child’s sport,” says Raymond Martin, DDS, MAGD, spokesperson for the AGD. “A mouthguard can not only prevent broken or knocked out teeth, but also jaw fractures, cerebral hemorrhage, and neck injuries by helping to avoid a situation where the lower jaw gets jammed into the upper jaw.”

Mouthguards are effective in moving soft tissue in the mouth away from the teeth, preventing cuts and bruising of the lips and cheeks, especially for those who wear braces. Mouthguards may also reduce the severity and incidence of concussions.

Although some are pricier than others, mouthguards come in a variety of price ranges to suit every family’s budget.

Dr. Martin feels that a custom-made mouthguard from a general dentist is the best option. “It offers the greatest protection, fit, and comfort level, because it is made from a cast to fit your child’s teeth,” he says. “The store-bought boil and bite mouthguards tend to move around, which can disrupt the child during



PLAYING IT SAFE
Mouthguards are effective in protecting you teeth. Wear one when playing sport activities
PHOTO: SXC.HU

play, and we all know that if a child doesn’t feel comfortable with the fit of a mouthguard, he or she won’t wear it.”

After choosing a mouthguard, maintaining its cleanliness is essential to preventing disease transmission and infection. Dr. Martin recom-

mends brushing the mouthguard with toothpaste after each use or at least once a week and keeping it in a well-ventilated plastic storage case when it’s not in use. Heat is bad for a mouthguard, because it can cause the mouthguard to melt and lose its shape, so don’t leave it in direct sunlight or in a closed automobile on a warm day.

“Keeping a mouthguard clean and maintained is important to protecting an athlete,” adds Dr. Martin. “Just as a helmet or pads are used in some sports, a mouthguard should be another piece of equipment that should be worn to help prevent injury.”

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Oral cancer detection saves lives

Did you know that 70 percent of oral cancer is discovered when it’s already in an advanced stage? And currently only half of all patients diagnosed with oral cancer survive more than five years. When diagnosed early, a person with oral cancer has an 80 to 90 percent survival rate.

That’s why Metro Dentalcare dentists and hygienists are dedicated to the fight against oral cancer by raising awareness, educating patients and performing regular oral cancer screenings. Metro Dentalcare dentists and hygienists are trained in oral cancer detection and recommend annual screenings.

DR. JOHN WITTENSTROM
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INSPIRATION



TIPS

Healthy teeth tips from the tooth fairy

Follow these simple tips to enjoy a healthy, pain-free smile every day of the year!

■ All Children should visit the dentist before age one, and children with special needs may require earlier and more frequent appointments.

■ Invest in a new toothbrush at least every three months and after every illness to avoid lingering bacteria and germs.

■ Eat plenty of healthy, tooth-friendly snacks such as fruit, vegetables, cheese, and yogurt.

■ Avoid spreading harmful bacteria to babies by watching pacifiers in warm soapy water; never “clean” a pacifier or bottle nipple by placing it in your own mouth.

■ Children should use only playground equipment that is surrounded by a soft surface such as loose sand, wood mulch or specialized rubber mats to avoid dangerous dental trauma.

■ Ask your dentist or pediatrician if fluoride toothpaste, varnish, mouth rinses, and supplements are recommended for your child.

■ If a permanent tooth is knocked loose due to dental trauma, push it back into the area or place it in milk and go immediately to a dental office.

■ Orthodontic appliances should be cleaned daily using a denture-cleansing bath and rinsed thoroughly before being reinserted into the mouth.

■ And of course, brush and floss your teeth twice a day and visit your dentist office every six months.

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ORAL
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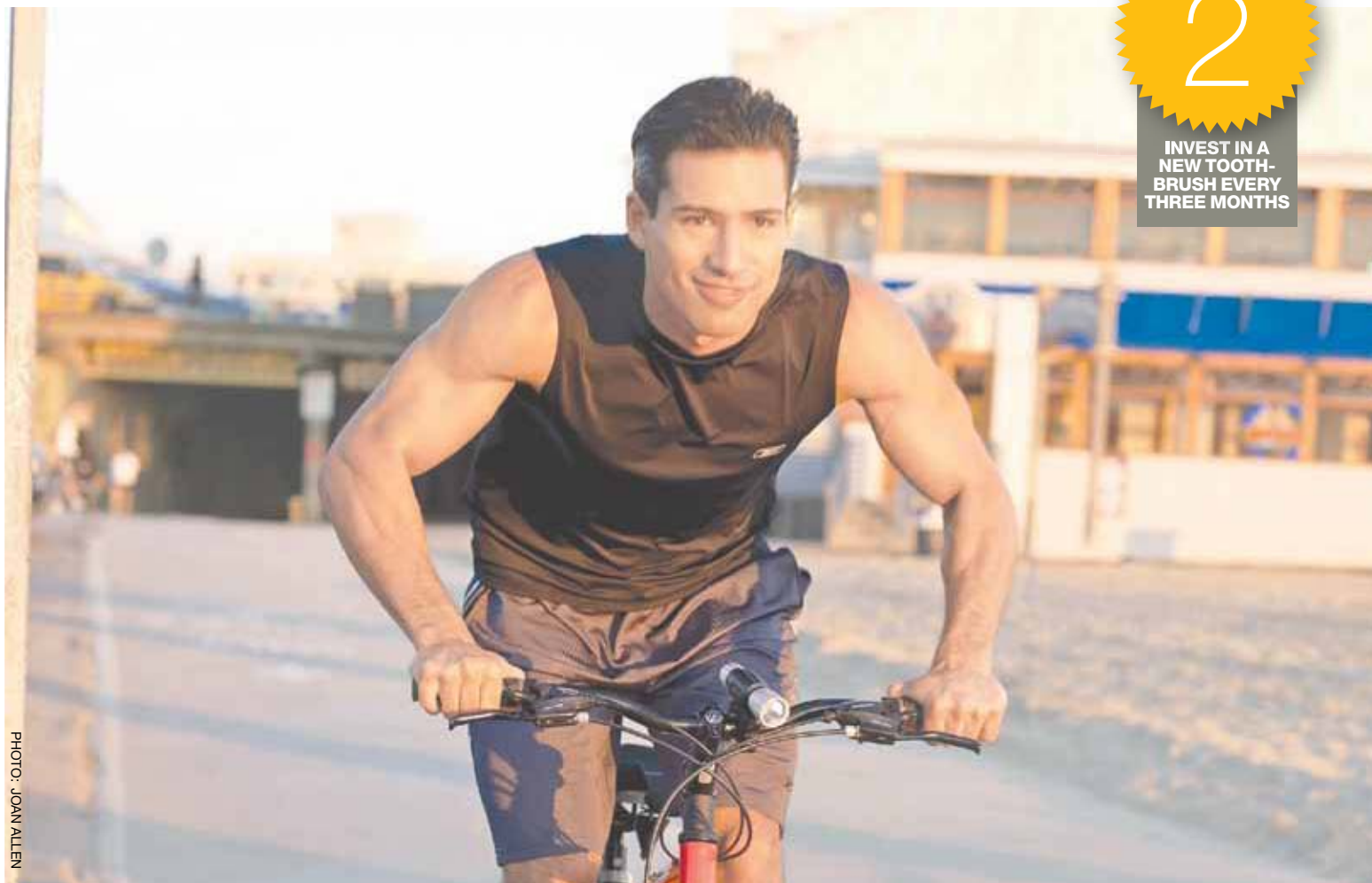


PHOTO: JOAN ALLEN

TIP

2

INVEST IN A
NEW TOOTH-
BRUSH EVERY
THREE MONTHS

Even with a hectic Hollywood schedule, a fitness book on the market, and a baby girl to care for, **Mario Lopez** makes time to tend to his oral hygiene, something he's taken seriously for a long time

Mario's health necessities

In 2008, the oral health website, DearDoctor.Com, awarded you with the “Male Celebrity Smile of the Year.” What's your secret?

Dental hygiene is a top priority in my life. I brush and floss every day. Also, I don't drink sodas...horrible for teeth. My go to necessities are:

- Mouthwash
- Toothbrush
- Floss
- Sugarless Gum

What is your view on how overall fitness positively

affects an individual's oral health?

When you're eating healthy and living clean, you're avoiding food and drinks that will stain your teeth and cause decay, therefore, your smile will reap the benefits!

What are your clearest childhood memories pertaining to your oral health? Were your parents adamant about your oral hygiene?

My parents were adamant, but I was also adamant about it. I got

very excited when I got my first electric toothbrush. Mouthwash became my best friend.

What lessons on oral health from your parents will you pass down to your newborn daughter?

Try to steer clear of the sodas, although as a kid that's hard. Try to keep them as a treat rather than an everyday drink.

MARIO LOPEZ

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“When you're eating healthy and living clean, you're avoiding food and drinks that will stain your teeth and cause decay, therefore, your smile will reap the benefits!”

INSIGHT

Question: How can we prevent tooth decay in children?

Answer: Implement good oral health habits to ensure children have the building blocks they need for a healthy future.

Healthy habits lead to happy smiles

CHANGE

Tooth decay is recognized as the number one chronic childhood disease. In fact, it is causing needless pain and suffering of thousands of children right here in the Twin Cities. It may seem ridiculous that tooth decay has reached epidemic proportions, but more than 40 percent of children suffer from tooth decay by the time they start kindergarten!

Many fail to realize that poor oral health can adversely affect a child's overall systemic health and ability to thrive. An estimated 16.5 million children in the US go without even basic oral health care each year. Lack of proper oral health care results rampant tooth decay, causing pain, infection, malnutrition, sleep deprivation and negatively impact a child's ability to learn and grow. However, tooth decay is preventable and implementing good oral health habits can ensure your child has the building blocks they need for a happy, healthy future!

Preventive dental care is an essential element to ensuring a

“Many fail to realize that poor oral health can adversely affect a child's overall systemic health and ability to thrive.”



Fern Ingber, MEd
President & CEO, National Children's Oral Health Foundation: America's Toothfairy

child's overall health and ability to thrive and should begin at the prenatal level and continue throughout early childhood and adolescence.

Taken from Page 4, here are a few of the most important tips from America's Toothfairy for a healthy smile!”

- Children should visit the dentist before age one, and children with special needs may require earlier and more frequent appointments.
- Invest in a new toothbrush at least every three months and after every illness to avoid lingering bacteria and germs.
- Encourage your child to eat healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, cheese and yogurt. Avoid starchy and sticky snacks that can cling to teeth and cause decay.
- Brush, floss and rinse at least twice a day.
- Children should visit their dentist once every six months.

For more great tips on preventing tooth decay and fun oral health activities for the whole family, visit www.AmericasToothfairy.org!

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DON'T MISS!

Dental implants explained

Crowns and conventional bridges or dentures may not be your only options when replacing missing teeth.

For some people, dental implants offer a smile that looks and feels very natural. Surgically placed below the gums over a series of appointments, implants fuse to the jawbone and serve as a base for individual replacement teeth, bridges or a denture. Implants offer stability because they fuse to your bone. Integration of the implants into your jaw also helps your replacement teeth feel more natural and some people also find the secure fit more comfortable than conven-

tional substitutes.

Dental implants can provide artificial teeth that look natural and feel secure. Dental implants can also be used to attach full or partial dentures. Implants, however, are not an option for everyone. Because implants require surgery, patients must be in good health, have healthy gums, have adequate bone to support the implant and be committed to meticulous oral hygiene and regular dental visits. If you are considering implants, a thorough evaluation by your dentist will help determine if you would be a good candidate.

MINNESOTA DENTAL ASSOCIATION

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O'BRIEN DENTAL CARE
JODY J. O'BRIEN, DDS

Dr. Jody has been providing compassionate care at her practice since 1996 during which time she has honed her skills in both cosmetic and neuromuscular dentistry. As one of only a handful of dentists in the state to earn the distinction of Fellow from the prestigious Las Vegas Institute, Dr. Jody has a distinguished resume of post graduate education which she utilizes in the delivery of compassionate care. Her ability to esthetically transform a smile coupled with the science of neuromuscular dentistry provides the best outcome for her patients; visually stunning smiles coupled with neuromuscular jaw alignment. While the visual alteration is easy for the patient to notice Dr. Jody gets the most satisfaction from patients say they feel even better than they look.

State of the art dental techniques and a keen eye for small details combined with excellent ceramics shine through with each smile design completed by Dr. O'Brien. So if you would like more information about receiving a complimentary smile analysis contact us today at ObrienDentalCare.com or view us online at ObrienDentalCare.com and take the first step toward an engaging new smile.



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NEWS



DID YOU KNOW?

Do I really need to floss?

Yes. Floss removes plaque and debris that sticks to teeth and gums in between teeth, polishes tooth surfaces, and controls bad breath. Plaque is a sticky layer of material containing bacteria that accumulates on teeth, including places where toothbrushes can't reach. This can lead to gum disease. By flossing your teeth daily, you increase the chance of keeping them for a lifetime and decrease the chance of getting gum disease.

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Is kissing good for your health?

With just one kiss couples can share more than 500 different types of disease-causing germs and viruses, warns the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD), a professional association of more than 35,000 general dentists.

"Not knowing who you are kissing could be as dangerous to your health as having multiple sexual partners," says AGD spokesperson Connie White, DDS, FAGD.

Before you pucker up again, Dr. White dishes on the most common diseases and viruses that you and your sweetie can transmit to each other while smooching:

Cold Sores

Cold sores are caused by the herpes virus. They appear as tiny, clear, fluid-filled blisters that form around the mouth and lips. The sores are highly contagious, espe-

cially if they are leaking fluid. However, even sores that have scabbed over can be contagious.

"A wound near the lips is most often herpes," says Dr. White. "A good rule of thumb is that if a person has any visible sores near his or her lips, avoid intimate contact!"

Colds

If you feel a cold or flu virus coming on, Dr. White suggests avoiding a make-out session. Common cold and flu viruses can be transmitted very easily through contact with the saliva or nasal secretions of a sick person. Yuck!

Mononucleosis

Mononucleosis, also known as the "kissing disease," is easily communicated to others through kissing, as well as sharing food, a cup, utensils or straws.

Dr. White says that college students are more prone to developing mononucleosis, due to a lowered

resistance and living in close quarters with other students.

"People can look as healthy as can be, but you have no idea what kind of diseases they are carrying," says Dr. White. "To protect yourself, know the person you are kissing."

If you're still in the mood—and you and your partner are healthy—stealing some smooches may benefit your oral health by increasing saliva production. Saliva helps to wash away food particles and cavity-causing bacteria. It also protects teeth from decay by neutralizing harmful acids.

Dr. White shares these tips to keep your breath minty-fresh:

To get fresh breath

Avoid spicy foods, such as onions and garlic, and coffee. These foods and drinks can be detected on a person's breath for up to 72 hours after digestion.

Brush and floss your teeth at least twice a day. Remember to brush the

tongue, cheeks and the roof of the mouth.

Chew sugar-free gum after meals to wash away food particles that get stuck between teeth and cause yucky odors.

"If these methods don't alleviate your bad breath, make an appointment with your general dentist to determine its source," says Dr. White. "If your dentist believes that the problem is caused internally, such as an infection, he or she may refer you to your family physician or a specialist to help remedy the cause of the problem."

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ACADEMY OF GENERAL DENTISTRY
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It also protects these other areas dentists check most: cavities, sensitivity, tartar, whitening, and freshens breath.

life opens up when you do

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NEWS



NEWS IN BRIEF

Healthy gums, healthy you

Recognizing the growing body of research showing a strong connection between a healthy mouth and a healthy body, the Minnesota Dental Association has launched a patient education campaign to help patients understand the connection and how to assess their own risk.

Called Healthy Gums, Healthy You, the campaign explains how a healthy mouth can be linked to a lower risk of heart disease, diabetes and pregnancy complications. It also explains what patients can do to keep their gums healthy, even into adulthood, and includes a simple online risk assessment tool to assess an individual's risk.

Gum disease begins when a sticky biofilm, called plaque, forms on teeth and can start to irritate gums. If it is not removed daily through brushing and flossing, gum tissues can start to weaken.

Patients can assess their own risk through an online risk assessment tool which can be found at: mndental.org. Warning signs include gums that bleed when brushed or flossed, persistent bad breath and gums that have receded from teeth.



MINNESOTA DENTAL ASSOCIATION
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Don't be misled by the high fruit juice content promoted on many sour candy packages. It sounds healthy, but the acid levels in these candies is causing **severe tooth erosion** in many of my young patients.

TIP

3

DECREASE
CONSUMPTION
OF SOUR CANDY

The power of sour on your teeth

It's not a pretty picture

Sucking and chewing sour candies has become a popular and seemingly harmless treat, especially among children, teens and young adults. In fact, the acid in sour candies weakens and wears away tooth enamel, which is essential to healthy teeth. In some cases, the damage can be very severe and lead to permanent tooth loss.

The hard facts about sour candies

- In the past 20 years, candies marketed to children have increasingly been of a "fruity" or "sour" variety.
- Sour candies are very acidic, with a low pH level (see chart).
- Some candy is so acidic it can actually burn gums and cheeks.
- Acid weakens and wears away tooth enamel.
- Teeth without protective enamel are prone to tooth decay.
- Each acid attack lasts about 20 minutes.
- Holding the acid in your mouth by prolonged candy sucking or chewing continues the acid attack.

The signs of tooth erosion

You may not notice tooth erosion in its early stages. However, sensitivity and discoloration are

early warning signs that can lead to more severe stages with continued acid attacks. Warning signs of tooth erosion include:

- Sensitivity occurs when tooth enamel wears away. You may feel a twinge of pain when consuming hot, cold, or sweet foods and drinks.
- Discoloration is visible as a slight yellow appearance on the tooth surface.
- Transparency of the front teeth appears along the biting edges.
- Rounding of teeth occurs along the surfaces and edges of the teeth.
- Cracks and roughness appear along the edges of the teeth.
- Dents (known as cupping) develop on the chewing surfaces of the teeth. At this severe stage, fillings may actually appear to rise up. • Tooth decay is caused by loss of the protective outermost layer of enamel.

How to protect your teeth

The best protection against tooth erosion is preventing acid attacks on your teeth. Eliminating or decreasing consumption of sour candies is

the first line of defense against potential permanent damage of your teeth.

- Reduce or eliminate consumption of sour candies.
- Don't suck or chew sour candies for long periods of time. Ongoing sucking prolongs acid attacks on your teeth.
- If you do eat a sour candy, swish your mouth with water, drink milk, or eat cheese afterwards to neutralize the acids.
- Chew sugar-free gum to produce saliva which protects tooth

enamel.

- After eating sour candy or other acidic food or drinks, wait one hour before brushing teeth. Brushing right away increases the harmful effects of acid on teeth.
- Ask your dentist about ways to reduce sensitivity or minimize enamel loss if erosion has begun.
- Use fluoride toothpaste and a soft toothbrush to protect your teeth.

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