



School Nurse Support Group Meeting

February 6, 2008

The presenter for this meeting was Debbie Arner, RN, Unit Manager Stark County Health Department. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, dental caries are the most common chronic disease affecting children in the US. They are five times more common than asthma, and seven times more common than hay fever. With all of the advances in oral health it is amazing to think that this problem continues to be a nationwide issue. The American Lung Association estimates that there are approximately 6.5 million children in the US under the age of 18 with Asthma, which would mean that nearly 32.5 million children in the US suffer from dental caries.

What causes cavities? **Plaque.** Plaque is a sticky film of bacteria that is constantly forming on your teeth. When eating and drinking foods that contain sugars or starches, this bacteria produces acids that attack the tooth enamel. The sticky film of plaque keeps the acids on your teeth and can cause a break down of the tooth enamel where a cavity can form (American Dental Association). This bacteria is not only from food, but can be transmitted from parent to child from situations such as kissing, sharing eating utensils, or blowing on a child's food to cool it down. Due to this, it is very important to stress to parents the need of entire family dental hygiene and dental visits, not just for the child.

How do I prevent cavities from forming?

- ◆ Brush teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- ◆ Clean between teeth with floss
- ◆ Eat a balanced diet and limit between-meal; snacks
- ◆ Visit your dentist regularly for cleanings and oral exams
- ◆ Ask dentist about dental sealants
- ◆ Chew gum with xylitol

What is xylitol? Xylitol is a sweetener often found in gum, that has been proven to prevent cavities. Studies have shown that as small as 4- 12 grams of xylitol per day is effective in reducing the risk of dental caries. Chewing one stick of gum containing xylitol four to five times a day immediately after meals may significantly decrease the risk of caries that an individual may experience.

Debbie also discussed the Stark County Dental Task Force and the Dental Clinic Resource Guide.

This resource guide will be made available on the School Nurse web page. Various handouts were provided and can be used in the school for Dental education.

NEXT MEETING: March 6, 2008 9am at the STARK COUNTY HD 3rd floor

TOPIC: Teens and Stalking

Stalking is a crime that is often misunderstood, minimized or missed entirely. This session will address the crime of stalking, including stalking behaviors, prevalence, and lethality. Additionally, this Web Cast will focus on the impact of stalking on youth in our country. We will review recent research on the use of technology in stalking and harassment cases involving teens and discuss the social trend of normalization of stalking and how it affects youth and teens.

SPEAKER: WEB CAST

APRIL meeting-- Kendal-- dietician from Akron Children's Hospital Diabetes and Carb Counting.

FEEL FREE TO INVITE ANYONE ELSE THAT YOU FEEL MAY BENEFIT FROM THESE SESSIONS (SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSLER, PARENT, SCHOOL DIETARY STAFF, TEACHERS)

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