**TIPS AND TRICKS**

**TOOTH BRUSHING**

- **Use only a small amount of toothpaste, usually just a smear**— just need enough toothpaste to coat your teeth with fluoride; no need to waste it, and children can have a tendency to swallow it.

- **Use only ADA approved toothpaste with fluoride** — this toothpaste has been tested for quality. Fluoride toothpaste has been shown to reduce tooth decay by 11%; fluoride to drinking water: 45-60%; fluoride varnish: 40-75%.

- **Use a soft bristle brush** — hard bristles can wear away the enamel and cause gums to pull away from the teeth. Soft, rounded bristles are more effective and less damaging to the teeth and gums.

- **Brush each tooth surface 10 strokes** — plaque, the sticky coating on the teeth, will build up during the day and it requires careful gentle brushing to remove it.

- **Brush in gentle, round motions** — circular motions gets the bristles in between the teeth to remove the plaque.

- **Brush especially along the gum line** — food and plaque collect along the gum line, getting under the gums if left on the teeth.

- **Brush the tongue** — 90% of germs in the mouth collect on the tongue’s surface.

- **Spit but do not rinse** — it is important to leave fluoride on the teeth for 30 minutes to have the best results for stopping decay.

- **Brush just after the last snack for the night and in the morning after breakfast** — during sleep, we have less saliva to wash away food.