

# Back to school

## Are your children's lunches tooth-friendly?

As classes kick off again, it's time for parents to study what they're sending to school in their children's lunch bags. Here are some tips to help your children eat right and maintain good oral health:

- › **Snack attack** – Try to limit snacking, which increases exposure to damaging acids that form in your mouth after eating. It takes at least 20 minutes for them to neutralize.
- › **Fruit and veggies** – Fruit and vegetables with more water such as apples, grapes, cucumbers, and celery are especially helpful because they help wash sugar and acid away from teeth.
- › **Something to chew on** – Sticky, chewy foods such as granola bars and cookies stick on teeth longer and allow more time for acid to harm teeth. Choose less chewy foods such as fruit, vegetables, cheese, and nuts.
- › **Sugar tooth** – Foods with high levels of sugar or starch increase acid production, and should be kept to a minimum.
- › **Drop the pop** – Soda, juice, and sports drinks are high in sugar and harmful to teeth. Instead, pack water or milk for lunches.
- › **Say "cheese"** – Some cheeses such as aged Cheddar, Monterey Jack, and Swiss fight cavities when eaten at the end of meals and after snacks.
- › **Talking point** – Talk to your children about healthy snacks and wise food choices from the school cafeteria.



Besides eating the right foods, maintaining your family's overall health includes flossing once a day, brushing twice daily, and having dental checkups.

## Receive your HumanaDental EOBs electronically

You can now receive your Explanation of Benefits (EOB) electronically. To take advantage of this convenient service, simply update your personal preferences at **HumanaDental.com** to indicate an e-mail address where you would like your e-EOB sent. Members without Internet access and those who still want to receive hard copies of their EOBs will still receive EOBs by mail.



## What does coinsurance mean?

Coinsurance is the portion of a service that you are required to pay. You can think of it as a percentage. For example, if a service costing \$100 is covered at 80 percent, your coinsurance is 20 percent, or \$20.

## Protect your teeth from sports injuries

As you and your kids keep in shape with sports, you'll probably want to add another piece of gear to your athletic bag: a mouth guard.\* A misdirected elbow in a one-on-one basketball game or a spill off a bicycle can leave you with chipped or broken teeth, nerve damage to a tooth, or even tooth loss. A mouth guard can keep you smiling, and there are several options:

- › **Ready-made:** Pre-formed that you can find at most sporting goods stores or pharmacies.
- › **Boil and bite:** You soften them in water and mold them to your mouth. Look for them at sporting goods stores.
- › **Custom-fitted:** Your dentist makes a mouth guard specifically for you.

Mouth guards vary in comfort and cost. Check with your dentist to see which one will work best for you.

\* Your dental plan may not cover mouth guards. See your coverage details document or call Humana Customer Care.

## Have your teeth and eat your candy, too

Halloween can be fun without harming your teeth. Follow these steps:

- › **Throw away all hard candies:** Hard candies are most likely to promote tooth decay because they remain in the mouth for an extended time. Hard candies can also chip teeth and cause young children to choke.
- › **Encourage children not to eat their candy until after Halloween:** This will give parents a chance to inspect and sort the treats.
- › **Avoid sticky candies:** Sticky candies can damage dental work, such as fillings and bridges, and orthodontic appliances like braces and retainers.
- › **Eat candy only when you can brush your teeth immediately afterward:** Candy for dessert after a balanced meal is acceptable. Do not include candy in school lunches or allow your children to eat candy continuously throughout the day.

Source: Dentistry.com