



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Five tips to keep your sweet tooth healthy this holiday season

**NAPERVILLE, Ill. (November 30, 2015)** – The holidays are a time for friends and family, but also for indulging in those inevitable seasonal sweets. Enjoying goodies is all part of the holiday fun, and Delta Dental of Illinois is offering some snacking tips so you don't end up at the dentist with cavities after the New Year.

"While not going overboard on holiday goodies is a good way to maintain your oral health – and overall health and well-being – being choosy about what sweets you eat can also be better for your teeth," said Dr. Katina Spadoni, dental director for Delta Dental of Illinois.

Cookies, candy and sweet holiday beverages all have at least one main ingredient in common: sugar. Sugar mixes with the bacteria in plaque that constantly form on teeth and produce acid. That acid attacks tooth enamel, causing cavities and other oral health problems.

The stickier the food, the less likely it will be washed away by saliva. Holiday favorites such as hard candy, fruit cakes, caramels and peanut brittle can stick to teeth and be more detrimental than other options on the sweets table. "Swap out caramels and candy canes for plain dark chocolate, which melts quickly and is less likely to remain on teeth," said Spadoni.

Along with choosing sweets wisely, Delta Dental of Illinois offers the following five holiday snacking tips to help keep your sweet tooth intact:

- Try to enjoy sweets with a meal. Saliva production increases during meals, which can help neutralize the acid being produced and rinse food particles from the mouth.
- Stay away from between-meal snacks. If you are craving a sweet, chew on gum that contains Xylitol afterward.

- Keep up good oral health habits. Try to brush away foods and plaque after eating. Always brush your teeth twice a day, floss at least one a day and visit your dentist regularly.
- Drink more water, especially after enjoying sweets. Consuming optimally fluoridated water can help prevent tooth decay and rinse away food particles.
- Be prepared. Keep a toothbrush, travel-size toothpaste and floss in your bag or car. Then you'll have no excuse to skip good habits when someone hands you the sweets tray this holiday season.

For more tips on taking care of your family's oral health, visit Delta Dental of Illinois' oral health resource at [YourOralHealthHub.com](https://www.youroralhealthhub.com).

#### **About Delta Dental of Illinois**

Delta Dental of Illinois (DDIL) is a not-for-profit dental service corporation that provides dental benefit programs to individuals and more than 5,000 employee groups throughout Illinois. DDIL covers 2 million individuals, employees and family members nationwide. DDIL is based in Naperville, Ill., and offers single-site administration and client services.

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