

PLAQUE ATTACK

experiment

When you brush your teeth, one of the goals is to get rid of the plaque that sticks to teeth. Plaque is a sticky paste made from bacteria. The bacteria use sugar from foods as a form of energy. As the bacteria eat the sugar, it makes acid. Acid will hurt your tooth enamel, making holes called "cavities" in it.

With this experiment, you can see how plaque "grows" if sugar and other foods aren't removed from teeth by brushing and flossing. Ask a grown-up to help with this experiment.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

2 clear plastic drinking cups,
12-16 oz. in size
2 cups of warm water

2 packets of yeast
1 tablespoon of sugar

Candy thermometer
2 spoons for mixing
1 marker

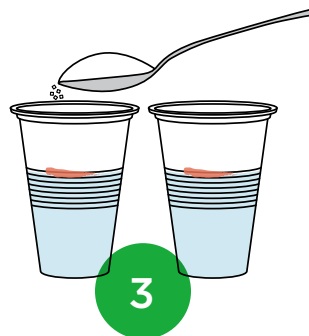
HOW TO DO IT



Pour a cup of warm water into each plastic cup. Warm water should be from 105° F to 110° F. You can use a candy thermometer to test the water.



Add a packet of yeast to each cup. Let it sit for about a minute, then stir the yeast into the water until fully dissolved. Be sure to use a separate spoon for each cup!



Add a tablespoon of sugar to one of the cups and stir it well. Make a mark on the outside of each cup to show the level of the liquid inside.



Watch the cups to see what happens! It may take up to 30 minutes to get the full effect, so you may want to set a timer and check the cups later.

What do you think will happen?
Write your prediction below, and see if you're right!