



## How to Keep Your Smile Healthy When You're Sick

### Background Essay

Nobody likes feeling sick. And sometimes when you feel crummy, you don't want to take care of yourself like you normally would when you feel healthy. But keeping a good oral hygiene routine even when you feel under the weather is important.

That's because even though you might feel like resting or taking the day off, cavities don't. There are always bacteria in your mouth and they're ready to feed on any leftover sugar from orange juice, cough drops and sports drinks.

This video resource is provided to help kids understand that the health of our whole bodies is connected—so even if they're not feeling good, they can still keep their mouths healthy. In this video, kids and teachers will learn 6 tips for making sure that cavity-causing bacteria doesn't build up in their mouths when they're feeling sick.

- They'll learn why it's a good idea to use sugar-free cough drops and cold medications to protect their teeth from cavities.
- Next, they'll learn why rinsing with water after taking liquid cold medication can help wash away the sugary medication from their mouths.
- Drinking plenty of water during the day can help kids stay hydrated and wash away cavity-causing acids and bacteria from their mouths.
- Sports drinks can provide a good boost of energy when you feel tired, but it's a good idea to select a sugar-free version.
- They'll learn that, like sports drinks, juices low in sugar are best for their smiles while sick.
- Last, keeping up their regular brushing and flossing routine is important.

As you watch this video, you can talk with kids about some of the things they do at home that make them feel better when they're not feeling good. Things like resting and eating favorite foods can be comforting, but you can also talk with your class about some other ways to keep their bodies healthy, like brushing and flossing daily.

It might also be helpful to pause the video while each tip is displayed on the screen and use that as a time to ask open-ended questions about the related content on screen.