

How astronauts stay healthy in space

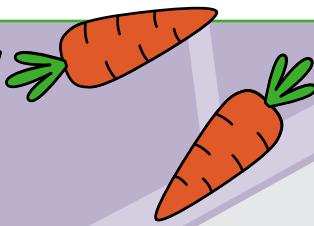
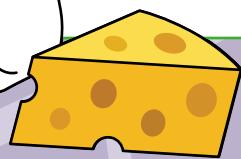
As Bitsy breathed in and out, excited about all the incredible things in outer space, she noticed a stale smell in her helmet ... Oh! It was time to brush her teeth! Luckily, Bitsy had watched Mrs. Timmins explain how astronauts take care of their teeth, and she was prepared.



Eat a healthy diet

In space, astronauts eat foods that are freeze-dried to prevent crumbs. They also eat food that comes from a squeeze tube, so parts of their meal don't float away!

You don't have to go that far, but you can eat like an astronaut with healthy foods. Calcium from milk and cheese supports strong teeth. And vitamin A from carrots helps prevent dry mouth and supports your vision. Those are just two examples of tasty foods that are also terrific for your teeth and gums.



Watch for new symptoms

Outer space doesn't have gravity or atmosphere like Earth, which can change an astronaut's oral health. They need to carefully watch for issues like dry mouth, tooth pain, or sore gums. That's because being in space makes them more likely to develop a cavity or gum disease! You can watch for any changes to your teeth and gums at home, too. Be sure to let your parents know if you notice anything different.



Break out your sunglasses

If you're in outer space or at the beach, it's important to take care of your eyes! Bright light from the sun can cause eye pain and other problems. To protect their vision, astronauts use special sunglasses and helmet visors that block out extra sunlight and radiation.



Use a special toothpaste

Astronauts use a unique toothpaste that is safe to swallow. Why? There aren't any sinks on a spaceship, which means they can't spit out the toothpaste after brushing. Instead, they swallow it — yuck! You should never swallow toothpaste at home. It can cause an upset tummy.

