Too Much Toothpaste?

When should you stop squeezing the toothpaste tube? Turn the page to find the answer to this and other important dental health questions!

As You Read
Think about the different things you can do to keep your teeth healthy.

My name ____________________________________________
A dentist helped us answer some of your toughest tooth questions.

What is a cavity? How do you fix it?

A cavity is a little hole in your tooth. You can get one when sugar stays on your teeth for a long time. Germs in your mouth eat the sugar, making an acid that eats away at your teeth.

Dentists can fix cavities. “We take out the germs and fill the hole with a filling that’s the same color as your tooth,” says Dr. Moursi, a dentist in New York.

It’s even better to prevent cavities! That means to keep from getting them at all. You can help prevent cavities by keeping your teeth clean.

Should I try to pull my loose tooth out?

When you’re about 6, you start to get your permanent teeth. They are the teeth you have for the rest of your life. As they grow in, they push on your baby teeth and make them loose.

Dr. Moursi says it’s OK to help your loose teeth fall out. “The faster they come out, the better,” he says. If they stay in your mouth too long, germs and food can get trapped under them, and that can hurt.

“Once your tooth is loose, wiggle away!” says Dr. Moursi. “Use your tongue or a clean finger.”
How much toothpaste should I use?

You don’t need a huge glob of toothpaste on your brush. Just squeeze out an amount the size of a pea!

Dr. Moursi says to use fluoride toothpaste. “The fluoride in the toothpaste prevents cavities,” he says. Brush for two minutes twice a day to keep your smile bright!

What are X-rays for?

Have you ever wondered what your body looks like on the inside? Then you’ll love getting your teeth X-rayed!

X-rays are pictures of the insides of things. Dentists take X-rays of your mouth to see what’s happening in your teeth and gums. X-rays can also show if you have cavities in hard-to-see places between your teeth.

What can I eat to keep my teeth healthy?

Crunchy fruits like apples and pears can help clean your teeth. How? When you chew, your mouth makes saliva. That’s spit! Saliva washes away sugar and harmful germs on your teeth.

A drink of water will also wash away that sugar! “After any meal or snack, the last thing in your mouth should be water,” Dr. Moursi says.