

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## The Secrets to a Bright Smile: Maintaining Clean and Healthy Teeth and Gums

### Short Answer Key

1. Limiting sugary and acidic foods is crucial because these foods can contribute to tooth decay and gum problems. Sugar feeds bacteria in the mouth, leading to the production of acids that harm tooth enamel. Acidic foods can erode enamel directly. By limiting these foods, you reduce the risk of oral health issues.
2. Staying hydrated is crucial for good oral health because water helps wash away food particles, bacteria, and acids in the mouth. It also maintains saliva production, which acts as a natural defense against tooth decay and dry mouth.
3. Regular dental check-ups and cleanings are essential because they allow dentists to identify and address dental issues early on, preventing more significant problems. Cleanings remove plaque and tartar buildup, reducing the risk of gum disease and cavities.
4. Smoking and tobacco use can lead to gum disease, tooth decay, tooth loss, and even oral cancer. These habits should be avoided to protect oral health.

