

Goal of Dental Care for Infants/Toddlers

- To avoid pain of early childhood caries.
- A pleasant, non-threatening introduction to dental care.
- To establish routine of good brushing and flossing habits.

Baby Bottle Caries

Decay of baby teeth caused by continuous and prolonged exposure to milk, infant formula, fruit juices, soft drinks, or other sugary fluids in baby's bottle or sippy cup.

- Children with baby bottle caries are most commonly fed those drinks right before bed or naptime, leaving time for the bacteria to grow and multiply around the teeth.
- Baby bottle caries appears white turning to brown as the active caries process progresses.

Things to avoid

- Avoid kissing baby on the lips. Transmission of bad oral bacteria, that cause cavities, can be introduced from parents to their infants.
- Avoid placing pacifier in the mouth for cleaning and giving pacifier back to baby. This too can transmit bacteria to the baby's mouth.
- Avoid giving baby milk, juice, or any other drink after brushing their teeth or when placing down for naptime or bedtime this can lead to baby bottle caries.
- Avoid sticky or sugary foods. These sticky foods or candies can cause cavities. Initial cavities look like white spots on the tooth and lead to brown spots as the cavity forms.



Early decay

Moderate decay

Advanced decay

5 Ways to Prevent Kids' Tooth Decay

Care don't share

Don't share utensils with your child or "clean" a pacifier by putting it in your mouth. You can transfer cavity-causing germs to your child.

Eat healthy

and drink fluoridated water

First dental visit

no later than age 1 year old

Use fluoride toothpaste

as soon as teeth come through the gums. When kids can brush their own teeth, have them brush

Seal out decay

Ask your dentist about applying dental sealants to chewing surfaces of teeth.

2 minutes **2** times per day

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References:

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Dental Care for Infants and Children

Caring for your baby's teeth is important for their overall health and development and good dental care starts before their first tooth arrives. Taking healthy steps to implement a dental care routine with your child can help protect your child's dental health in the future.



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Early Dental Care for Baby

- It is up to the parent to assume daily oral hygiene responsibility for baby. Experts recommend a dental visit within the first year.
- The Food and Drug Administration warns **NOT** to use any benzocaine name brand or generic products such as: Baby Orajel, Orajel, and Orabase Paste for children under 2 years old.
- After feeding, wipe the ridges with a soft washcloth where the teeth will later appear removing leftover food. This establishes a routine of cleaning the gums.



Finger Brush

- When teeth begin to erupt, daily plaque removal is necessary and a finger brush can be used.
- As a precaution, fluoride toothpaste should not be used on children under 3.
- If you give a child a bottle before bed, make sure it is only water. Milk and other sugary drinks can cause decay if left on the teeth.

When do baby teeth come in?

When baby teeth are pushing through the gums, babies can have sore or swollen gums. Rubbing their gums with a small, clean, and cool washcloth can be soothing.

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends children visit a dentist by their 1st birthday or 6 months after their first tooth has come in.

What teeth are present and when?



Brushing Technique for Children

- When the child's first set of molars come in begin using a soft brush that is age appropriate. **Pea size amount for children 3 to 6**
- Brush teeth at least 2 times a day for 2 minutes.
- Children will have 20 baby teeth in all. Baby teeth are important for chewing, speaking, and proper spacing of adult teeth.
- When brushing aim the toothbrush at a 45 degree angle towards the gums and softly brush in little circles or gently jiggle the toothbrush into the gum tissue.
- Brush all surfaces of the tooth. The action of brushing is important to remove plaque buildup on the teeth.
- When teeth start to touch, begin flossing daily.



Placing your child in your lap can be beneficial, fun, and educational.

- Tell them what you are doing and show them what you found.
- This will prepare them for the dental chair.
- Letting your child hold a timer while you brush will let them feel more connected to the activity.
- Let them hold on to the handle with you while you brush. This way they can get a feel for the movement.
- Have them practice brushing on their favorite stuffed animal for fun.



Flossing Technique for Children

- When teeth touch it can be hard to remove food in-between them, for this reason flossing can be equally as important as brushing.
- Begin flossing when you notice teeth touching. All baby teeth should be present between 2 to 3 years old. The chart below shows when teeth appear and fall out.
- Using a seesaw motion, gently ease floss between the teeth. Once past the contact point (where the teeth touch) create a C-shape by hugging the tooth and sliding the floss up and down until the surface is clean.



- The green arrow below shows the tight space between the young teeth. This would be an area to floss daily because brushing alone would not remove food trapped in between teeth.
- Floss picks can be great for kids too!



Upper Teeth	Erupt	Shed
Central incisor	8-12 mos.	6-7 yrs.
Lateral incisor	9-13 mos.	7-8 yrs.
Canine (cuspid)	16-22 mos.	10-12 yrs.
First molar	13-19 mos.	9-11 yrs.
Second molar	25-33 mos.	10-12 yrs.
Lower Teeth	Erupt	Shed
Second molar	23-31 mos.	10-12 yrs.
First molar	14-18 mos.	9-11 yrs.
Canine (cuspid)	17-23 mos.	9-12 yrs.
Lateral incisor	10-16 mos.	7-8 yrs.
Central incisor	6-10 mos.	6-7 yrs.