



A Parents Guide to
CHILDREN'S
DENTAL
HEALTH



Brought to you by:



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THE IMPORTANCE

of dental health from a young age

Teaching your child proper oral care at a young age is an investment in his or her health that will pay lifelong dividends. You can start by setting an example; taking good care of your own teeth sends a message that oral health is something to be valued. And anything that makes taking care of teeth fun, like brushing along with your child or letting them choose their own toothbrush, encourages proper oral care.

HEALTHY STEPS TO FOLLOW



- 1 Brush twice a day with an ADA accepted fluoride toothpaste to remove plaque — the sticky film on teeth that is the main cause of tooth decay.
- 2 Floss daily to remove plaque from between your teeth and under the gumline, before it can harden into tartar. Once tartar has formed, it can only be removed by a professional cleaning.
- 3 Eat a well-balanced diet that limits starchy or sugary foods, which produce plaque acids that cause tooth decay. When you do eat these foods, try to eat them with your meal instead of as a snack — the extra saliva produced during a meal helps rinse food from the mouth.

HEALTHY STEPS TO FOLLOW

- 4 Use dental products that contain fluoride, including toothpaste.

Make sure that your children's drinking water is fluoridated. If your water supply,

- 5 municipal, well, or bottled, does not contain fluoride, your dentist or pediatrician may prescribe daily fluoride supplements.

- 6 Take your child to the dentist for regular checkups.



BRUSHING TECHNIQUES

1 Use a pea-sized dab of an ADA accepted fluoride toothpaste. Take care that your child does not swallow the toothpaste.



2 Using a soft-bristled toothbrush, brush the inside surface of each tooth first, where plaque may accumulate most. Brush gently back and forth.



3 Clean the outer surfaces of each tooth. Angle the brush along the outer gumline. Gently brush back and forth.



BRUSHING TECHNIQUES



4 Brush the chewing surface of each tooth. Gently brush back and forth.

5 Use the tip of the brush to clean behind each front tooth, top and bottom.

6 It's always fun to brush the tongue!



Flossing Tips



Proper flossing removes plaque and food particles in places where a toothbrush cannot easily reach – under the gumline and between your teeth. Because plaque build-up can lead to tooth decay and gum disease, daily flossing is highly recommended.

Start with 18 inches of floss



Wind ½ around one of your middle fingers & the rest around the middle finger of your other hand



Hold the floss tightly between your thumbs and your index fingers



Insert gently between two teeth



Curve the floss against the side of the tooth into a “C” shape



Rub the floss gently up and down, while pressed against the tooth



Repeat until you’ve flossed all of your teeth, top and bottom!

HOW TO MAKE IT FUN

Set a Timer

As we know, it's important to brush for about two minutes each session. There are many ways to track time while brushing that can engage kids and make it fun.

Play a 2
minute
song

Use a
stopwatch
to track

Download
a [brushing
timer app](#)

Create a
brushing
calendar



HOW TO MAKE IT FUN

Provide an Incentive

Working towards a goal allows kids to stay focused and monitor progress. Create a brushing routine and ensure they stick to it by allowing your child to enjoy a fun reward after accomplishing a specific goal of # of days, weeks or months.

**Extra play
time**

**Stickers or
ribbons**

**A healthy
snack**

**Doing a fun
activity**



HOW TO MAKE IT FUN

Let Them Be Involved

By allowing your children to be involved, it gives them a sense of ownership and responsibility that makes them take pride in their clean teeth.

**Choose
their own
toothbrush**

**Pick out
the
toothpaste**

**Set the
timer or
count**

**Mark each
brushing as
complete**

DENTAL CARE

for Babies

- Help prevent [plaque bacteria](#) by gently cleaning a newborn baby's gums with a damp cloth after feedings. Just be sure to use water only, not toothpaste.
- Don't put your baby to bed with a bottle of formula or juices that contain sugar.
- Once teething begins at about 4 to 6 months, get little ones used to having their teeth brushed. Extra-soft bristles and a pea-sized dab of non-fluoride toothpaste are best.
- Even babies can develop [gingivitis, decay, and cavities](#), so it's a good idea to see a pediatric dentist early—use a “first visit by first birthday” strategy.



TEETH CARE

for Toddlers

- At about age two, it's okay to start using fluoride toothpaste—but make sure there's no swallowing.
- Want to teach the proper length of time for [brushing](#)? Try singing “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” or another upbeat favorite for two minutes.
- Usually by ages three or four, all 20 primary or “baby” teeth have appeared. Permanent, or “adult,” teeth appear by age six and may continue to emerge into the teen years.
- If you have a toddler who is afraid of the dentist, you might make your little one more comfortable by letting him or her sit in your lap during the exam.

OLDER KIDS

and Dental Care

As kids get older, they want to feel more independent. Part of growing up includes assuming responsibility for taking care of their own teeth—without prompting from parents. Appeal to what matters to them: Kids want to look good to their peers, they want to smile in selfies, and they don't want to spend their free time sitting in the dental professional's chair.

Another big challenge for children is avoiding sugary snacks and drinks. Healthier snack options let them enjoy better dental and overall health. If your kids are involved in sports, a mouth guard to protect their teeth from injury can keep them safe and looking good for a lifetime.

Flossing is an important lesson to teach. You might also want to ask your dental professional about sealants or fluoride treatments for added protection against decay.

WHAT TO AVOID

SWEETS & TREATS

Soda	Chew Candy	Citrus Fruits	White Bread	PB & J
Sports Drinks	Hard Candy	Canned Fruits	Popcorn	Tomatoes
Energy Drinks	Sour Candy	Crackers	Ice	Breath Mints
Fruit Juices	Dried Fruits	Potato Chips	Vinegar	Tannic Acid



YOU'RE NEVER

→ Fully ←

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SMILE

Thank You for Reading



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