

Dental Care:

Fluoride varnish can be applied every 3-4 months to protect the teeth from cavities. Ask your doctor or dentist about varnish.

Bring your child to the dentist by age 1. See the dentist every 6 months to a year.

Fluoride rinses can be used before bed starting at age 6, if your child can spit well.

Parents who care for their own teeth are more likely to have children with healthy teeth. These tips can apply to the whole family. If you have cavities or mouth pain, make an appointment with a dentist right away.



Tips to Make Brushing Fun!

- Play your child's favorite song while brushing for 2 minutes.
- Tell a 2-minute story using fun voices.
- Download a brushing app that plays while your child is brushing.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, and the American Dental Association



Department
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HEALTHY TEETH AND MOUTH TIPS



Teeth Care:

Brushing

- Start brushing your child's teeth as soon as they appear.
- After 12 months, brush in the morning after breakfast and at night. Bedtime is the most important time. Lift the upper lip and brush along the gum line.
- Nothing sugary to eat or drink (only water) at night once the teeth are brushed.
- Help your child with brushing until they can tie their own shoes. Remind them through adolescence.
- Flossing should start once the teeth touch. It is best to floss at night.



Toothpaste

- As soon as the teeth appear, begin using fluoride-containing "cavity protection" toothpaste.
- For infants and toddlers until age 3, use a smear (or a grain of rice) amount of toothpaste.
- For children 3 years of age and older, use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste twice daily.

Fluoride supplements

- Ask your child's doctor about the fluoride level in your tap water to decide if fluoride supplements should be prescribed.
- If you live in a community that does not add fluoride to the water, fluoride should be taken every night starting at 6 months of age.
- Do not rinse the mouth after brushing or taking the fluoride supplement.

Diet Tips:

Eliminate the bottle at 12 months of age.

Juice and other sweet beverages

- No juice for babies less than 1 year of age.
- Only give 100% fruit juice.
 - 1/2 cup for ages 1-3
 - 3/4 cup for ages 4-6
 - 1 cup for ages 7-18
- Limit sweetened drinks to mealtimes but better to avoid completely.
- Remember, soda, sports drinks, and fruit juice all contain sugar.

Foods

- Snacks between meals should be fresh fruits, vegetables, cheese, and water. Limit carbohydrates like cereals, crackers, cookies, cakes, etc.
- Sticky foods (raisins, fruit roll-ups, sticky candies, etc.) should only be eaten rarely and only when the teeth can be brushed right away.
- If your child chews gum, insist on a sugarless gum.
- The best gum contain xylitol as the first ingredient.

