



DENTAL BENEFITS

Keep your child smiling from day one

Healthy teeth and gums are important - no matter how old you are. Start healthy habits young. If you take care of your baby's mouth early on, your child will be on their way to a great smile and a healthy life.

Healthy habits for your baby

You can help to prevent early tooth decay. The bacteria that cause decay are usually passed from mother to child through saliva. Follow these tips to protect your child:

- Make your baby's first dental visit when their first tooth comes in or around their first birthday.
- Always hold your baby when bottle feeding.
- Never put your baby to bed with a bottle.
- Never put soda or juice in your baby's bottle.

Birth to 6 months:

- Get your baby used to having their gums and/or teeth cleaned. Do this by gently wiping their gums and teeth with a clean, soft cloth after every feeding and before they go to bed at night. This is standard practice.
- Ask your doctor about giving your baby fluoride.

6 months to 1 year:

- Make your baby's first dental visit when their first tooth comes in or around their first birthday at night. This is standard practice.
- Choose a pediatric dentist for your child.
- Keep in mind that first dental visits are mostly educational.

OVER →

1 year:

- Help your baby drink from a regular cup instead of a bottle or “sippy” cup.
- Brush your baby’s teeth to make sure they are clean — but be sure to let them get involved and have fun.
- Talk to your baby’s dentist if you see white or brown spots on your baby’s teeth.

Toddlers:

- By age two or three, most toddlers have all of their baby teeth.
- Make brushing their teeth fun. Turn on music and brush together.
- Help your child brush twice a day.
- Show your child how to use toothpaste at age two, or when your dentist says it’s time.
- Floss your child’s teeth daily.

Young children:

- At age 5 to 7, most kids start to lose their baby teeth and get permanent teeth.
- To keep teeth healthy, help your kids brush for two minutes, twice a day. Check out [2min2x.org](https://www.2min2x.org) for videos to brush along to.
- Have your child swish and swallow water after meals and snacks.

- Let your child brush on their own. Then go back over the child’s brushing to get what they may have missed.
- Help your child floss once a day.
- Give your kids healthy snacks that are low in sugar. Avoid sodas, and limit juices to less than 4 ounces a day. Sugary foods and drinks cause tooth decay.

Preteens and teens:

- By age 13, most teens have about 28 permanent teeth.
- Encourage your teen to take care of these permanent teeth by brushing for two minutes, twice a day, and flossing once a day.
- Remind kids that sports and energy drinks, soda, and junk food can damage teeth.
- Be sure your teen knows that taking care of teeth and gums helps prevent bad breath, stains and tooth loss.
- Ask your teen to drink lots of water and carry a toothbrush, floss and toothpaste.
- Ask your teen to chew sugarless gum after meals or snacks if brushing isn’t possible.

Questions?

We’re happy to help.

Call us toll-free at 844-663-4440.

TTY users, please dial 711.

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