

Children's Oral Health Initiative

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**A guide to looking after
your children's oral health.**

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Oral health essentials

- Supervise your children's oral health practices until they are 8 years old.

This will make sure their teeth get the proper care and attention they need.

- Begin your child's oral health at infancy.

Baby teeth are very important, and tooth brushing is an essential habit that should start from an early age.

- Brush your child's teeth for two minutes twice a day.

This will help them to avoid oral problems in the future.

The last thing to touch your child's mouth before going to bed should be a toothbrush (or washcloth for babies).

Oral health and general health

- Oral health is critical to overall health.

Oral problems could have a great affect on your child's development and wellbeing, for example; problems with eating and drinking, pain and discomfort, restless nights, fatigue and low concentration, low self-esteem and a reluctance to smile.



\\ A child's diet is very important for the teeth. \\

Wean your child off of bottle-feeding when possible, and teach them to drink from a baby cup.

- Limit children to three meals and two snacks a day.

Avoid food that contains high levels of sugar, or adding sugar to your child's food or milk.

Choose healthy snacks, like fruit and vegetables. Cheese is also a good option.

- Drink water!

Avoid letting your child drink juice and soft drinks.

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Brushing

- Children's teeth should be brushed twice a day, especially before they go to bed.
- Brushing is important as it removes plaque from the surface of the teeth.

Plaque is a constantly growing, build up of bacteria. If not removed, the plaque can produce acids that lead to tooth decay (cavities).

Proper brushing with fluoride toothpaste is one of the most proven ways to stay decay free.

- Start brushing you children's teeth as soon as they appear, even if they are just baby teeth.

Treat brushing as a routine, and make sure you brush all of the teeth not forgetting the teeth at the back of the mouth (molars).

We recommended that you help or assist your child when brushing, as children aren't fully dexterous until they are 7 or 8 years old.

- Choose a toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles.

Never share a toothbrush, and replace it every 3 months or when it becomes splayed.

- Use age appropriate fluoride toothpaste.

Ask your dental professional if you are not sure about which toothpaste you should use for your child.

Flossing

- Flossing helps to remove the plaque in between the teeth that brushing may have missed.

Flossing regularly can help to build good habits for the future.

It's a good idea to get some tips from a dental professional.

Children under the age of 8 should be assisted by an adult.



\\ Maintain regular dental check-ups \\

- Ideally, children should start visiting a dental professional from the age of 1.

It will help them become familiar with the dental environment, and you will be able to get important information and advice.

Discuss with your dental professional how to provide good oral hygiene for your child, and get further information about toothbrushes, toothpastes, flossing and dental sealants.



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Dentist's info: