



Your child's dental health is directly linked to their overall health. Poor oral health can lead to painful infections, malnutrition, lack of sleep, and lifelong health problems. It is critical to pay attention to your children's dental health.

Oral Health Tips for Babies

Baby teeth play an important role in speech development, a child's appearance and facial structure, nutrition and ensuring that permanent teeth erupt in the correct positions. Although permanent teeth eventually replace baby teeth, it is essential to keep them healthy. Decay and infection in baby teeth can cause damage to developing permanent teeth.

- Beginning at birth, clean infant gums with a damp cloth or soft toothbrush and warm water after each feeding and check your child's gums and teeth daily.
- Avoid spreading harmful bacteria to babies by washing pacifiers in warm soapy water; never "clean" a pacifier or bottle nipple by placing it in your own mouth.
- All children should visit the dentist before the age of one. Children with special needs may need earlier and more frequent visits.

Oral Health Tips for Kids

- Brush and floss twice every day and visit your dentist every 6 months!
- Get a new toothbrush every 3 months and after each illness to avoid lingering bacteria and germs.
- Eat plenty of tooth-friendly snacks such as fruit, vegetables, cheese and yogurt. Avoid starchy and sticky snacks that can cling to teeth and cause decay.
- Ask your dentist or doctor if fluoride rinses, toothpaste, varnish, and supplements are recommended for your child.
- Clean orthodontic appliances daily with a denture-cleansing bath and thoroughly rinse before inserting into the mouth.
- Children should use only playground equipment that is surrounded by a soft surface such as loose sand, wood mulch or specialized rubber mats to avoid dangerous dental trauma.
- If a permanent tooth is knocked loose due to dental trauma, push it back into the area or place it in milk and go immediately to a dental office.

Make Dental Visits Fun

Regular dental visits will enable your child to develop a sense of familiarity and comfort with the dental team. These visits will also include vital preventive care necessary for a healthy smile. Here are some ways to make visits to the dentist less stressful:

- Reading can have a soothing and calming effect on your child. Bring their favorite book to read to them during their appointment.
- Let your child wear a costume to their dental visit. This special treat can help them view going to the dentist as a fun activity.
- Allow your child to bring their favorite toy or blanket with them on their dental visit to give them an added sense of security and comfort.

