

Tips for Brushing Children's Teeth



Baby teeth are important for a child's nutrition, speech development, and self-esteem.

Brushing teeth 2 times a day for 2 minutes is very important for your child's overall health.

- ✓ Use a small soft-bristled toothbrush.
- ✓ Brush in small circles – getting all the way to the gums, on the top, inside and outside surfaces of all teeth!
- ✓ Don't forget to brush the tongue!
- ✓ Toothbrushes should be replaced every 3-4 months or when the bristles bend out or flatten.
- ✓ Floss once daily as soon as the sides of teeth touch each other. There are handy floss-piks that can help to reach into those small mouths!

Brushing teeth is essential, so here are some tips to encourage your child to look forward to it!

- ✓ Use 2 brushes – one for you to hold and one for your toddler to hold.
- ✓ Take turns gently brushing each other's teeth.
- ✓ Play peek a boo with teeth and practice counting them as you brush.
- ✓ Model the behaviour by making brushing a family activity.

Toothpaste with Fluoride — A guide for use with children



Monitor the amount of fluoridated toothpaste used! **More is NOT better.**

Swallowing too much fluoridated toothpaste can result in Fluorosis (white splotches) on adult teeth.

* How to know if your child is at risk for tooth decay?

- Speak to your dental provider.
- Call the Health Unit and speak to a member of our dental team.
- Refer to the interactive quiz on the Health Unit website.

Child's Age	Amount of toothpaste with fluoride to use:	
0-2 yrs old (up to age 2)	Adult to brush baby's teeth twice a day with water only (unless advised otherwise by a healthcare professional, or deemed at risk for tooth decay) *	If deemed at risk for tooth decay (by healthcare professional), use a rice grain sized smear of fluoridated toothpaste to brush baby's teeth with twice daily
2-3 yrs old (up to age 3)	Brush twice daily with a rice grain sized smear of fluoridated toothpaste Adult supervision & assistance Encourage spitting of excess toothpaste	
3-6 yrs old	Brush twice daily with a green pea sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste Adult supervision & assistance Encourage spitting of excess toothpaste	
7+ yrs old	Children need help brushing their teeth until they can write their name - around age 8-10 years old, depending on their dexterity Slightly more toothpaste can be used as more teeth erupt, but always encourage spitting and instill responsible use of toothpaste	