

Oral Health

Pregnancy to First Year



Pregnancy and Oral Health

Regular dental visits are important **before, during, and after pregnancy**. To develop the best oral care plan for you, inform your dental professional about:

- ▶ Pregnancy and other changes to your health
- ▶ Medications you are taking
- ▶ Special recommendations made by your doctor



During pregnancy:

- ▶ A change in hormones can cause the gums to become tender, swollen, and bleed easily when brushing and flossing (pregnancy gingivitis)
- ▶ A change in appetite and more snacking on sugary foods may lead to tooth decay
- ▶ Gum disease may be linked to pre-term or low birth weight babies

For the best oral health during pregnancy:

- ▶ Brush twice a day using toothpaste with fluoride, and floss once daily
- ▶ If you vomit, do not brush for 30 minutes to avoid acid wear on your teeth. Instead, rinse with water or a fluoride mouth wash
- ▶ Professional cleanings are important to prevent pregnancy gingivitis

Early oral care promotes good oral health for a lifetime!



When will my baby's teeth appear?

The first primary (or “baby”) tooth usually comes at about 6 months, but it isn't unusual for teeth to appear as early as 3 months or late as 12 months. Every child is different, but most will have all 20 primary teeth by 3 years, but please remember this is only a guide. At around 5 or 6 years, your child will start to lose their primary teeth to make room for their permanent teeth.



Sign and symptoms

Teething can cause minor discomfort. You might notice the following signs as teeth begin to appear.

- Increased drooling and skin irritation around the mouth
- May be fussy and irritable
- Red cheeks and red, swollen gums
- Show a need to chew on things
- Refusal of food due to soreness of the gums
- Do not ignore a fever. Getting new teeth does not make babies sick or give them a fever. If your child has a fever, check with your doctor.

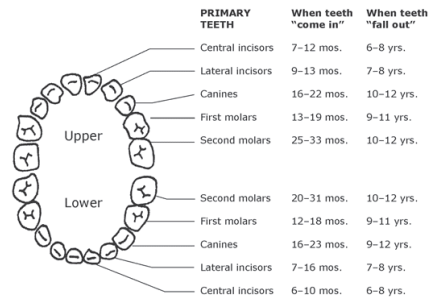


Image courtesy of Canadian Paediatric Society

Best way to soothe your baby

- Massage your baby's gums with a clean, chilled, damp face cloth
- Offer chilled teething rings, solid rubber. Do not freeze the teething rings
- If your child is eating solids, offer cold items such as applesauce or yogurt or chilled banana
- Speak to your health care provider about pain relief options

AVOID

- Teething medications that are rubbed directly on your baby's gums can numb their throat, and are not recommended
- Teething biscuits are not recommended as they contain sugar and can cause tooth decay

Baby Teeth Are Important!



Baby Teeth are Important!

See a dental professional by baby's first birthday to discuss specific oral health options for your child. The Health Unit Oral Health Team offers free 1st visits at our clinics.

Tooth Decay is Preventable:

- Begin baby's oral care the 1st week.
- Wipe baby's gums daily from birth, then brush teeth twice daily once present.
- Ensure baby has swallowed all breastmilk* before lying down. Gums and teeth should **always** be cleaned before bedtime.
- Lift the lips monthly to check teeth. If changes are noticed, contact a dental professional.
- The Canadian Dental Association (CDA) recommends an assessment by a dentist within 6 months of eruption of the first tooth, or by 12 months of age. Prior to the visit with the dentist, the Health Unit Oral Health Team can provide oral health information and a free dental screening.
- Severe decay can affect your child's health.



**If you have made the informed decision to formula feed, these recommendations also apply to your baby.*

Did You Know?

Oral health affects our overall health. Healthy baby teeth are necessary for good nutrition, speech development, and self-esteem.

Signs of Early Childhood Tooth Decay (ECTD)

- ▶ ECTD initially appears as white chalky areas at the gum line
- ▶ It can progress to brown spots on enamel
- ▶ Top front teeth usually show signs first



HEALTHY TEETH



MILD DECAY



MODERATE DECAY



SEVERE DECAY

Did You Know?

Cavity causing bacteria can be transferred to your baby through saliva. Cutlery, soothers, food and drinks should not be shared.

Toddler Care

- ▶ For oral health, water is the best choice between meals and snacks
- ▶ Breastfeeding is recommended up to 2 years and beyond
- ▶ Start using an open cup at 6 months of age when solid foods are started
- ▶ Speak to your dental professional about tooth friendly foods and drinks
- ▶ Proper dental hygiene is important to ensure sugars are removed from teeth
- ▶ Children under 3 should have their teeth brushed using only water twice a day by an adult. A health professional may recommend the use of fluoridated toothpaste over water alone if the child is at a risk of developing tooth decay. Use an amount of toothpaste equal to the size of a grain of rice.
- ▶ Start flossing once a day when the teeth are touching

Fluoride Varnish

Fluoride Varnish is a safe and effective part of a cavity prevention program. Fluoride varnish is simply brushed onto the teeth, allowing for easy application on young children. The varnish sets on contact with saliva leaving a sticky covering of varnish on the tooth surface for several hours, which provides maximal absorption of fluoride into the tooth enamel and minimal risk of fluoride consumption. Contact your dental provider or a member of the Oral Health Team to discuss how fluoride varnish may benefit your child.



First Year, First Visit

The Canadian Dental Association (CDA) recommends an assessment by a dentist within 6 months of eruption of the first tooth, or by 12 months of age.

- This helps to spot potential problems at early stages when treatment is most simple. Baby teeth can decay quickly, and are very important for a child's speech and nutrition.
- This first dental appointment can seem overwhelming to parents, especially if they have any anxiety surrounding the issue themselves. Having your little one see a dentist early helps to develop a worry-free dental relationship, and save money.
- Prior to a child's first visit with the dentist, the Health Unit Oral Health Team can provide oral health information, and a free dental screening.

Tips for Brushing Children's Teeth

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 Oral Health Team

Child's Age	Amount of toothpaste with fluoride to use:
0-3 yrs old	Adult to brush child's teeth twice daily. Use water only, unless deemed at risk for tooth decay by a health professional. If fluoridated toothpaste is recommended, use an amount equal to the size of a grain of rice. Encourage the child to spit out excess toothpaste.
3-6 yrs old	Adult to monitor and assist child brush their teeth twice daily with fluoridated toothpaste. Use an amount equal to the size of a green pea. Encourage the child to spit out excess toothpaste.
7+ yrs old	Child to brush their teeth twice daily and adult to monitor and assist as required. Slightly more toothpaste can be used as more teeth erupt. Encourage the child to spit out excess toothpaste.

Snacks and Drinks

When it comes to offering your child food and drinks, it is important to remember there are such things as tooth friendly and not so tooth friendly snacks.

- Of course most fruits and veggies are all very tooth friendly, along with nuts, whole grain (like bread, brown rice, cereal, quinoa, pasta), milk, cheese, meat and meat alternatives.
- Other foods like granola bars, crackers, and trail mix tend to stick to the teeth after chewing. When possible you should brush your child's teeth after eating stickier foods.
- Limit candy, cakes, chips etc. as these foods have the greatest potential for causing cavities.
- Breastmilk, water, milk are good choices for drinks.
- Soft drinks, sports drinks, juice (including 100% fruit juice, fruit drinks, fruit cocktails, lemondade, ice tea, etc.) should be avoided because of the high sugar content.
- Children should never have constant access to a sugary liquid i.e. juice in a sippy cup or bottle. If your child is going to have a sugary liquid they should drink it from an open cup at a meal time and brush teeth afterwards.

CAUTION!





Tooth Friendly Snacks

VEGETABLES & FRUITS

- Celery
- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Beans
- Peppers
- Zucchini
- Cucumber
- Tomatoes
- Cauliflower
- Apples
- Pears
- Kiwi
- Bananas
- Grapes
- Berries
- Melons
- Persimmons
- Oranges
- Mangos
- Canned Fruit in water

WHOLE GRAINS

- Whole Grain Breads
- Whole Grain Cereals
- Whole Grain or Multigrain Bagels
- Wraps, Flatbread, Pitas, Chapati, Challah
- Rice Cakes Original or Cheese Flavoured
- Bulgur, Quinoa
- Popcorn (unflavoured)



PROTEIN FOODS

- Cheese
- Milk
- Yogurt, Kefir
- Eggs
- Chicken, Meat, Fish, Tofu
- Seafood
- Legumes (beans, peas, lentils)
- Seeds, Nuts*
- Nut Butter*
- Hummus
- Roasted Soybeans

OTHER

- Smoothies made from yogurt and fruit
- Sugarless gum

** Be aware of allergy restrictions in schools and daycares*



Sometimes Snacks

Remember, although some of these snacks may be nutritious, it is recommended that you only have them every now and then because they tend to stick to your teeth.

- Granola Bars*
- Muffins
- Crackers
- Breadsticks
- Dried Fruit
- Trail Mix
- Pretzels
- Nachos
- Pretzel & Cracker Mix



** Chocolate covered and/or with marshmallows are not "Tooth Friendly"*



NOT Tooth Friendly

CANDY

- Jelly Beans
- Suckers
- Hard Candies
- Mints
- Toffee
- Chocolate Bars
- Regular Chewing Gum
- Marshmallows
- Fruit Gummy Snacks

CEREAL/COOKIES/ETC.

- Sweetened Cereals
- Tarts, Pies
- Cakes, Cupcakes
- Donuts
- Pudding, Jello
- Cookies with Icing
- Chips
- Flavoured Popcorn
- Rice Marshmallow Squares



Liquids



Tooth Friendly

- Water
- White milk and unsweetened fortified soy beverage
- Breastmilk



NOT Tooth Friendly

- Soft drinks
- Sports drinks
- Fruit/vegetable juice
- Iced tea
- Instant hot chocolate
- Milk shakes
- Chocolate Milk



**Children do not need juice. If you do offer juice, make sure it is 100% fruit or vegetable juice, and limit to ½ cup per day served with meals or snacks*

***Any liquid containing sugar can lead to an increased risk of tooth decay*

Good oral health is important to the overall health of children.

Remember to: brush 2 times a day for 2 minutes, floss once a day, visit a dental professional regularly, stick to tooth friendly drinks and snacks.

For more information, call 1-800-660-5853
or visit www.healthunit.org

