

ORAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

Did you know?

Poor oral health can negatively affect how a young mouth develops. It can also affect a child's confidence, social interactions and potential for success later in life.

TOOTH TIMELINE

Teeth erupt through the gums in stages. Every child develops at their own pace, so small differences in the timing are perfectly normal.



6 YEARS OF AGE

Permanent (adult) teeth usually start to appear

BY THE AGE OF 12

Most permanent teeth have erupted, except for the wisdom teeth

18 TO 25 YEARS OF AGE

Wisdom teeth usually appear (sometimes later or not at all)

HOW TO CLEAN A GROWING MOUTH

Toothbrushing is an essential skill for lifelong oral and overall health. That's why it's important to help or supervise brushing until children can do it well on their own.

-  Make sure children brush for **2 minutes, 2x a day** using fluoride toothpaste.
-  Use a toothbrush with a **small head and soft to medium bristles**, replacing it every three to four months.
-  Brush every surface using either a manual toothbrush (with circular motions) or an electric toothbrush (following the manufacturer's instructions), making sure to **clean the inside, outside and chewing surfaces of the teeth**.
-  As the new **adult molars** come through, **pay extra attention** to them because their deep grooves can trap food and plaque.
-  Help your child clean between their teeth once **two neighbouring teeth touch**, using floss or interdental brushes. As they grow and baby teeth are replaced by adult teeth, encourage them to continue this habit every day.

YOUR GUIDE TO FLUORIDE TOOTHPASTE

Fluoride toothpaste helps protect teeth. To prolong its protective effect, spit out any excess toothpaste after brushing rather than rinsing with water.

Make sure the toothpaste contains the correct amount of fluoride for your child's age:



Children aged 0-3: Use a smear of toothpaste with no less than 1000 ppm fluoride.

Children aged 3-6: Use a pea-size amount of toothpaste with between 1000-1500 ppm fluoride.

Children aged 7+ and adults: Use a toothpaste with between 1350-1500 ppm fluoride.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIET, CHECK-UPS AND MORE



Encourage a balanced, low-sugar diet, as nutrition and oral health are closely linked.



Limit your child's intake of sugary snacks and drinks. Having sugar throughout the day increases the risk of tooth decay. Keep "free sugars" (those added to foods and drinks) to less than 10% of daily energy intake – ideally below 5% (3 teaspoons).



Get regular dental check-ups to monitor tooth growth and alignment.



Ensure your child wears a well-fitting mouthguard during contact sports and when cycling to avoid injuries to the mouth.

WHERE TO GO NEXT



Find practical tips on managing your child's sugar intake in the **Risk factors for oral diseases** fact sheet.



World Oral Health Day
20 March



EVERYONE,
EVERYWHERE
IS INVITED
TO JOIN US

#GENERATIONSMILE
#WOHD27

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