



# **Dental Care for Your Child**

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# Dental Care for Your Child

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## How should I clean my child's teeth?

1. Starting at birth, clean your infant's gums after feeding by wiping them with a damp cloth or finger brush.
2. Once the first tooth erupts, begin brushing their teeth twice/day with a soft-bristled toothbrush. Use a smear of fluoridated children's toothpaste for children under 2 years and a pea-sized amount for 2-5 year old children.

It's important to help young children with brushing, as they are not yet able to brush their teeth effectively by themselves. With good instruction, a five-year old is usually able to brush on their own. The best way to teach your child good oral hygiene is to lead by example.

## When should I bring my child to the dentist?

"First visit by first birthday." The ideal time as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Dental Association, and the Academy of General Dentistry is approximately one year of age. Not all children are ready at 1 year; use your judgment. We would like to see them for their first visit by age 2 and every 6 months thereafter.

# Common Questions

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## What is "Baby Bottle Tooth Decay"?

Baby bottle tooth decay, now known as Early Childhood Caries, is the presence of cavities on multiple teeth in an infant or young child. These cavities most often appear as dark pits on the front teeth, but can affect any tooth in the mouth. If left untreated, these cavities can become so severe that the tooth cannot be repaired and requires removal.

## What causes Early Childhood Caries?

Cavities are caused by bacteria. These bacteria live in our mouths, on our tongue, cheeks, and teeth. They turn the sugars and starches we eat into acid. This acid dissolves the surface of the tooth and creates a cavity. Early Childhood Caries occurs when a child's teeth are exposed to sugar for frequent and prolonged periods of time. Putting your child to bed with a bottle containing a sweetened liquid such as, sweetened water, juice, milk, breast milk, or formula greatly increases your child's risk of developing cavities. The unswallowed liquid will feed the oral bacteria, resulting in acid production, and eventually cavity formation.

## How can I prevent Early Childhood Caries?

### DO

- Brush teeth twice a day.
- Limit the number of sugary drinks and snacks your child eats

### DON'T

- Put your child to sleep with a bottle containing anything but water

## Is thumb-sucking or pacifier use a problem?

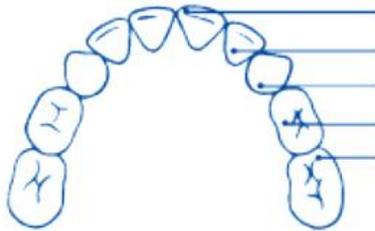
Thumb-sucking is normal for infants, and most will stop by age 2. If thumb-sucking continues when the permanent teeth erupt, it can lead to crooked teeth and bite problems. To avoid these potential complications, encourage your child to drop the habit by age 5.

## My child is grinding his/her teeth, should I be concerned?

Teeth grinding is very common in children less than 7 years of age and usually stops when the first permanent molars erupt. Typically no treatment is necessary, but please mention it at your next appointment so that we can monitor the habit.

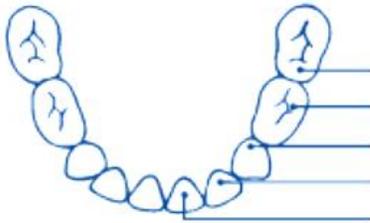
1. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
2. American Dental Association
3. [www.drjay.com/1stvisit.htm](http://www.drjay.com/1stvisit.htm)
4. Aetna Ins Co

## Primary Teeth



### Upper Teeth

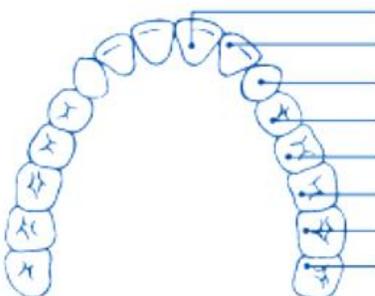
Teeth	Erupt	Shed
Central incisor	8-12 mos.	6-7 yrs.
Lateral incisor	9-13 mos.	7-8 yrs.
Canine (cuspid)	16-22 mos.	10-12 yrs.
First molar	13-19 mos.	9-11 yrs.
Second molar	25-33 mos.	10-12 yrs.



### Lower Teeth

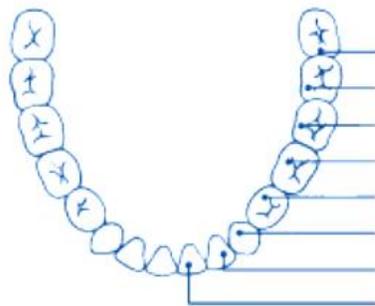
Teeth	Erupt	Shed
Second molar	23-31 mos.	10-12 yrs.
First molar	14-18 mos.	9-11 yrs.
Canine (cuspid)	17-23 mos.	9-12 yrs.
Lateral incisor	10-16 mos.	7-8 yrs.
Central incisor	6-10 mos.	6-7 yrs.

## Permanent Teeth



### Upper Teeth

Teeth	Erupt
Central incisor	7-8 yrs.
Lateral incisor	8-9 yrs.
Canine (cuspid)	11-12 yrs.
First premolar (first bicuspid)	10-11 yrs.
Second premolar (second bicuspid)	10-12 yrs.
First molar	6-7 yrs.
Second molar	12-13 yrs.
Third molar (wisdom tooth)	17-21 yrs.



### Lower Teeth

Teeth	Erupt
Third molar (wisdom tooth)	17-21 yrs.
Second molar	11-13 yrs.
First molar	6-7 yrs.
Second premolar (second bicuspid)	11-12 yrs.
First premolar (first bicuspid)	10-12 yrs.
Canine (cuspid)	9-10 yrs.
Lateral incisor	7-8 yrs.
Central incisor	6-7 yrs.