

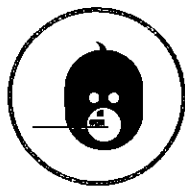


A CHILD'S TEETH and gums are important. Teeth are needed for chewing, talking and smiling.

BABY TEETH NEED to stay healthy even though they will be lost. They hold space for straight and healthy permanent teeth.

MAKE SURE your own teeth and mouth are healthy. The germs in your mouth that cause cavities and tooth decay can spread to your child!

- Never share your spoon and fork.
- Don't chew a baby's food or taste the food before feeding the baby.
- Clean a baby's pacifier with water, not by licking it.
- Take care of your own teeth and visit the dentist yourself.



FROM birth to 1 year old:

Most babies get their first teeth at around 6 months.

But it's a good idea to protect a baby from the start:

- Breastfeed your baby.
- Put a baby down to sleep without a bottle.
- Begin giving a baby a cup around 6 months of age.
- Wipe or brush the baby's gums and teeth every day, especially after eating.
- Use clean washcloth or a moist, soft, child's toothbrush.
- Do not use toothpaste.

STARTING AT AGE 1, take the baby to the dentist at least once a year.

- Don't let a baby use a bottle after 12 months.
- Check a baby's teeth and gums for early tooth decay every day.
 - Look for white, brown or black spots on the baby's teeth. If you see any spots, take him or her to the dentist right away.
 - Check the gums for swelling, bleeding and pimples.



FROM 1 to 2 years old:

- Stop bottle-feeding and continue checking teeth and gums daily.
- Put water in a training cup if he or she is carrying it around.
- Provide healthy snacks between meals, not sweet ones.
- Wash gums and teeth with a washcloth or soft toothbrush without toothpaste.
- Check every week for early signs of tooth decay.



FROM 2 to 3 years old:

- Brush a child's teeth twice a day, especially before bedtime.
- Ask a doctor or dentist about fluoride toothpaste when the child is about 2-years-old.
- Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Teach a child to spit out the toothpaste after brushing.
- Don't let a child swallow or eat toothpaste.
- Start teaching a child to brush his or her teeth but remember you still need to help.
- Take a child to the dentist at least once a year.

FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA

HEALTHY TEETH TIPS

HEALTHY GUMS FOR HAPPY SMILES

Keeping a child's teeth and gums healthy

PROTECT A

CHILD'S teeth as he or she grows older. When a child is 3 to 5 years old:



- Help the child brush at least twice a day.
- Floss his or her teeth every day.
- Take the child to the dentist at least once a year.

Wonder where to find a dentist?

Call the California Dental Association:
(800) 232-7645 or (800) CDA-SMILE

Call the California Society of Pediatric Dentists:
(800) 503-9780

Call the Denti-Cal Hotline:
(800) 322-6384