

GIVE KIDS A SMILE DAY



GOOD DENTAL CARE

WHEN SHOULD I TAKE MY CHILD TO THE DENTIST?

- Your child should generally see a dentist within 6 months of getting his first tooth, or by age one at the latest -- "First visit by first birthday" is a good rule of thumb, according to both the American Dental Association and the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.



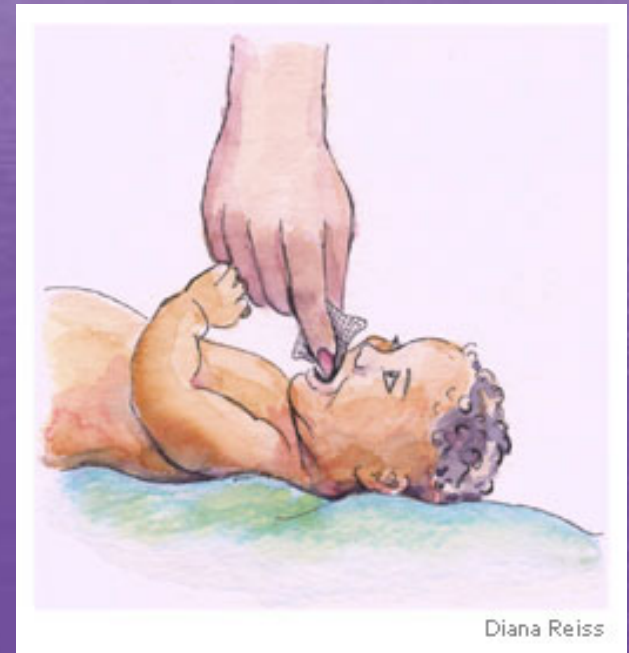
WHAT WILL HAPPEN ON MY CHILD FIRST DENTAL VISIT?

- Your child's first visit to the dentist should be low-key and comfortable. As parents, you should feel very comfortable with the dentist before she examines your child. To make sure everything looks healthy, the dentist will check both your child's teeth and gums paying particularly close attention to any sign of baby bottle tooth decay, a common problem in infants and toddlers.



WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD START TO BRUSH HIS/HER TEETH?

- Clean your child's very first teeth by rubbing them gently with a damp piece of gauze.
- When the first molars come in, usually by the age of 10 months, it's time to start daily brushing.
- Use a soft-bristled brush and water.
- Move the brush back and forth gently in short strokes, making sure you reach the front, back, and chewing surfaces of all teeth. Be extra careful around her tender gums.



HOW CAN I HELP MY OLDER CHILD BRUSH?

- Until your child is old enough to handle a toothbrush on her own-probably when she's five or six-you'll need do the actual brushing. Again, use a soft-bristled toothbrush and a pea-sized dab of fluoride toothpaste. When the child turns three, start brushing twice a day, once after breakfast and once before bed. Even when she starts brushing her own teeth, she still needs a parent to supervise until she's 7 or 8.



WILL MY CHILD BE GETTING TOO MUCH FLORIDE?

- Young children who swallow large amounts of fluoride toothpaste can develop fluorosis, which leaves harmless but unsightly white patches on teeth.



DOES MY CHILD NEED TO FLOSS?

- Children need flossing as soon as they have two teeth that touch together.
- After your child's teeth are brushed, wrap a length of floss tightly around two of your fingers, and guide it between your child's teeth using a gentle rubbing motion.
- Slide the floss up and down along the side of each tooth, and clean the gum line by carefully sliding the floss under the gum in the space between the gum and tooth.



WHAT FOODS CAUSE CAVITIES?

- Anything sweet, starchy, or extra sticky can promote cavities.
- Letting a child suck on a bottle in bed is really asking for trouble, both for dental reasons and because it can also cause choking.
- Try to limit your child to two or three snacks a day, and encourage her to eat raw fruit, vegetables, nuts, and non-sugary drinks.



CAN SUCKING ON A THUMB OR PACIFIER HURT MY CHILD'S TEETH?

- For children under 4, these behaviors are harmless. But those children who keep on sucking into their kindergarten years can end up with permanent teeth that are misaligned. A dentist can tell you if your child's habit is likely to cause trouble.



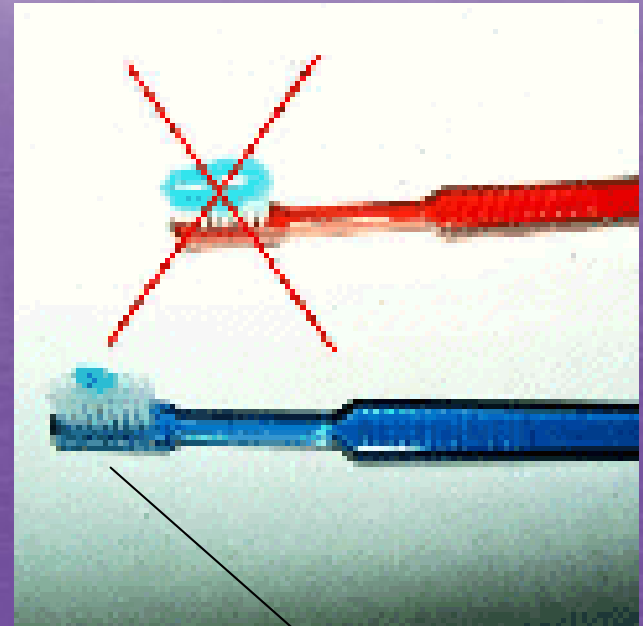
WHAT IS TOOTH DECAY?

- Plaque is an invisible, sticky film of bacteria or germs that live on your teeth. These bacteria love sugars and starches found in many foods.
- If you don't clean your teeth after eating, plaque bacteria can use the sugar and starch to produce acids that destroy the hard surface of the tooth called enamel. Over time, tooth decay develops.



HOW CAN WE PREVENT TOOTH DECAY?

- Proper tooth brushing helps to remove the plaque from the outside, inside, and chewing surfaces of your teeth.
- Brush your teeth at least twice a day with a soft-bristle brush that is not worn out.



A pea sized amount of
Toothpaste should be enough
For brushing

PROFESSIONAL CARE

- Regular dental check-ups play an essential role in maintaining good oral health.
- These visits are designed to help prevent problems from occurring and catch those that do while they are easier to treat.

