

Short Communication

Importance of Pediatric Dentition and Oral Hygiene Maintenance

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Introduction

Children's teeth play an important role in **digestion** and **reserving spaces** for permanent teeth. Children's teeth are also known as **primary teeth**. Due to the smaller jaw size of a child, there are only 20 teeth in total. In comparison, there are 32 teeth in an adult's mouth. Children are not born with teeth. Teeth usually begin to **erupt** from 10 months of age and finish around 29 months of age. The primary teeth consist of incisors (cutting teeth), canines (tearing teeth) and molars (grinding teeth). The tooth consists of a crown and root, and the tooth is composed of different materials that aid in **strengthening, preserving** and **maintaining** its function

When do baby teeth come in?

A baby's 20 primary teeth are already present in at the jaw at birth and typically begin to appear when a baby is between 6 months and 1 year.

Most children have a full set of 20 primary teeth by the time they are 3. Every child is different, but usually, the first teeth to come in are located in the top and bottom front of their mouth.

When teeth first come in, some babies may have sore or tender gums. Gently rubbing your child's gums with a clean finger, a small cool spoon, or a wet gauze pad can be soothing. You can also give the baby a clean teething ring to chew on. If your child is still cranky and in pain, consult your dentist or physician.

Why is taking care of baby teeth so important if they are just going to fall out?

Baby teeth are very important to your child's health and development. They help him or her chew, speak, and smile. They also hold space in the jaws for permanent teeth that are growing under the gums. When a baby tooth is lost so early, the permanent teeth can drift into space and make it difficult for other adult teeth to find room when they come in. This can make teeth crooked or crowded. That's why starting infants off with good oral care can help protect their teeth for decades to come.

When should you take the child to the Dentist?

After the first tooth comes in and no later than the first birthday. A dental visit at an early age is a "well-baby check-up" for the teeth. Besides checking for cavities and other problems, the dentist can show you how to clean the child's teeth properly and how to handle habits like thumb sucking.

How should we care for a child's teeth?

Much importance should be given to care for your baby's teeth from the start. Here's what to do

>>Begin cleaning your baby's mouth during the first few days after birth by wiping the gums with a clean, moist gauze pad or washcloth. As soon as teeth appear, decay can occur. A baby's front four teeth usually push through the gums at about 6 months of age, although some children do not have their first tooth until 12 to 14 months

>>For children younger than 3 years, start brushing their teeth as soon as they begin to come into the mouth by using fluoride toothpaste in an amount no more than a smear or the size of a grain of rice. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per day (morning and night) or directed by a dentist

or physician. Supervise children's brushing to ensure that they use the appropriate amount of toothpaste.

>>For children 3 to 6 years of age, use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per day (morning and night) or as directed by a dentist or physician. Supervise children's brushing and remind them not to swallow the toothpaste.

>>Until you're comfortable that your child can brush on his or her own, continue to brush your child's teeth twice a day with a child-size toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. When your child has two teeth that touch, you should begin cleaning between their teeth daily.

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