

Keeping Kids' Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Healthy!



HEALTHY TEETH



Why should teeth stay healthy?

- Tooth decay or cavities are a common problem in the US.
- Children who have cavities are at a higher risk for getting more cavities.
- Tooth decay is painful. It will affect how your child eats, speaks and learns.



Students with dental pain may have trouble:

- Staying on track in school
- Having confidence or high self-esteem
- Making friends
- Focusing in class

When should children see the dentist?

- Starting at age 1, all children should have their teeth cleaned at the dentist at least

EVERY SIX MONTHS

- Even though they will lose their primary teeth, tooth decay on these teeth can cause problems with speaking, eating, and affect the formation and healthy of their adult teeth.

Where can I find a dentist?

- **School:** Ask your child's teacher or school nurse if dental screenings happen at your child's school!
- **Community:** Talk to other parents who take their kids to the dentist.
- **Doctor:** If you are having trouble finding a dentist, sometimes your doctor or pediatrician can provide fluoride treatments. While a full dental cleaning is preferred, fluoride can protect kids teeth and can be a good alternative if there is no dentist in the area.

Visit the dentist right away if children:

- Say their tooth or face hurts
- Say it hurts when they eat or drink
- Are sensitive to really hot or cold food and drink
- Have holes in their teeth
- Have brown, black, or white stains on a tooth

If you see tooth decay, get it evaluated by a dentist even if your child says it does not hurt. Dental screenings help identify cavities that your child is not complaining about.



What can I do at home?

- **Encourage brushing:** all children should brush their teeth for **2 minutes, 2 times a day**
- Use toothpaste with fluoride
- Floss once a day

Under Age 3

Use only a small "smear" of toothpaste because they won't be able to spit.

Ages 3 to 6

Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.



Begin brushing as soon as teeth come out of the gums!

When you start brushing your child's teeth, you can use a soft brush or a clean cloth with water on it 1-2 times per day.



As kids get older, encourage them to brush their own teeth!

To start, have them brush first and then you brush for 2 more minutes to make sure they did a good job.