

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cavities in 2 to 5-year-olds are increasing. Sugary beverages in sippy cups may be the cause

Teenagers

Your teenager now makes most of their snack choices. Help them be aware of the amount of sugar in sports drinks, sodas and simple carbohydrate snacks such as chips, french fries, cookies, etc.

Help your teenager understand that it is not just how much sugar they eat and drink that contributes to cavities, but also how often

Diet sodas and non-carbonated sports and fruit drinks still contain acid that damage the teeth. Remind your teen to make these drinks a sometimes treat and to avoid sipping on them throughout the day

Gum disease can begin to occur. Signs of gum disease in teenagers include:

- Bleeding gums when they are brushing and flossing regularly
- Red and swollen gums
- Bad breath

If you suspect gum disease, it is important for your teen to see a dentist

When brushing their teeth, teenagers should also gently brush their tongue and gums

Wisdom teeth typically come in between 17 and 21 years of age. Just like the other molars, food and plaque will gather easily on the top surfaces

Risk Factors For Childhood Cavities

History of cavities in the family

Frequent sweets, juice, sodas, sports drinks

Continually snacking or sipping on drinks (other than water), throughout the day

Not brushing or cleaning the teeth on a regular basis

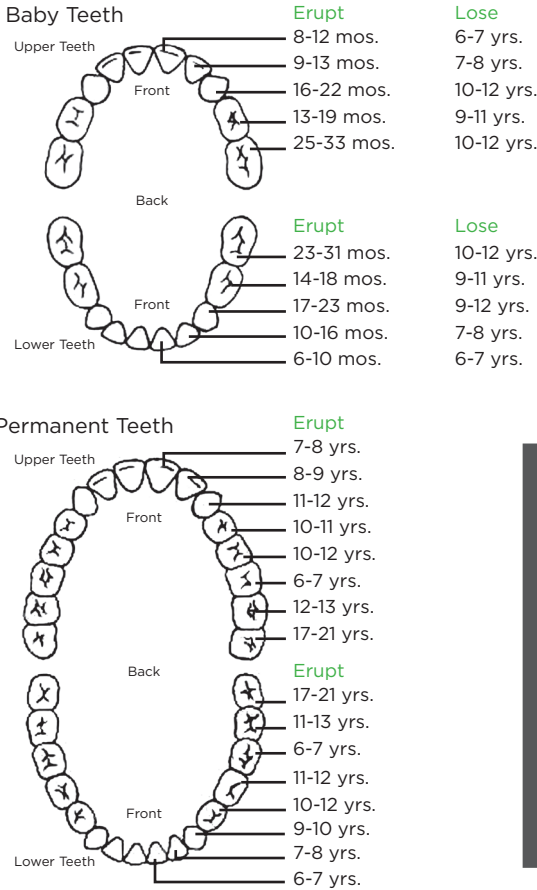
Insufficient fluoride in water or through supplements

Chalky white spots on teeth along the gum line

Not getting professional dental care on a regular basis



The Developing Smile



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BREAK THE CYCLE

Don't Pass Cavities On To Your Child!

Delta Dental Community Outreach

...should not have to experience the pain and distraction of cavities. These guidelines can help break the cycle of cavities in your family and give your child a healthier smile

During Pregnancy

See a dentist early in your pregnancy, and be sure to tell the dentist you are pregnant

Your mouth should be as healthy as possible before your baby is born. Untreated gum disease may cause your baby to be born early or to be underweight. Also, a mother's untreated cavities increase the risk of cavities for her child

Brush twice a day for two minutes and floss once a day

Rinse vigorously with water after snacking

Before Teeth Erupt

Wipe your baby's gums with a small moistened cloth twice a day

Never leave a bottle with anything other than water with your baby after they fall asleep

Do not put items from your mouth into your baby's mouth. This can put cavity-causing bacteria into your baby's mouth

Never put any sweetener on the pacifier

Introduce a cup around 9 months and encourage the transition from a bottle to a cup by the first birthday

Make milk and water your baby's primary drinks. Give juice in moderation and dilute it with water

To help your baby with teething, try:

- Rubbing the gums with a clean finger
- A clean teething ring. Some babies like the ring chilled
- A cold, damp washcloth

After Teeth Erupt

As soon as teeth appear, begin using a small, soft-bristled toothbrush with just a tiny smear of fluoride toothpaste

Begin flossing for your child when two teeth touch

Ask your dentist if the area you live in has fluoride in the water or check if the bottled water you use contains fluoride. If not, talk with your dentist or pediatrician about possible fluoride supplementation

Avoid sharing your toothbrush, or children sharing toothbrushes

Do not allow your child to sip on drinks or continually snack throughout the day. Anything other than water creates acid in the mouth, which weakens the tooth enamel and can start cavities

If you or the child's siblings have a history of cavities, schedule a dentist visit by their first birthday

4 grams of sugar is equal to 1 sugar cube. If a drink contains 20 grams of sugar, it's equal to giving your child 5 sugar cubes

2 to 5 Years

Take turns with your child to brush their teeth. The child should brush first, with you brushing after to clean any areas they may miss. Also, brush with your child as they will watch and imitate you

Always help put toothpaste on your child's toothbrush (use 1/2 of a pea-size amount)

Establish set snack times to discourage continual snacking. If twenty minutes after a snack food is still visible around the teeth, that snack is not healthy for your child's teeth and gums

Read juice and snack labels to know how much sugar they contain and limit your child's sugar intake

Give healthy snacks, such as cheese, yogurt, cut up vegetables and fruit. Have your child drink water after snacking to help wash food away from the teeth and gums

By age three, your child should see a dentist every six months

6 to 13 Years

If your child can tie their shoes, then they have the dexterity to properly clean their teeth. However, it is important that you continue to monitor your child's brushing (twice daily for 2 minutes) and flossing

At age 6, increase the amount of toothpaste your child uses to a pea-size amount

Around 6, your child will begin losing their baby teeth to make room for their permanent teeth

At around 6 and 12, your child's permanent molars will come in

90% of children's cavities occur on the tops of their molars. Having dental sealants can help reduce cavities by 72%

Braces trap food and can make cleaning the teeth and gums a bigger challenge. Be sure your child continues to see their dentist on a regular basis in addition to their orthodontist

If your child is playing sports, invest in a mouth guard



Cavities are caused by bacteria that can be passed from a parent to a child