



NEWSLETTER

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Healthy Teeth

GOOD DENTAL HEALTH STARTS EARLY!!!

Dental Health Starts Before Birth

Your baby's teeth begin to develop at 5 to 6 weeks of pregnancy. Eating a balanced diet is needed to receive the proper amounts of nutrients for strong teeth and bones. It is also important to visit a dental professional regularly during your pregnancy.

Tooth Decay

Early Childhood Tooth Decay can begin as soon as the first baby tooth erupts (4-6 months of age). If left untreated, tooth decay can affect the child's overall health and quality of life.

Good Oral Habits

Good oral habits such as brushing, flossing and the use of fluoride toothpaste are important on a daily basis, and for a lifetime.

Visit your Dentist

Dental visits are a good start and are recommended 6 months after the first tooth appears. Children should see the dentist at least once a year.

Adapted from www.interiorhealth.ca

TIPS FOR TEETHING

- ✓ Give your child a clean chilled teething ring or wet face cloth to chew on to ease teething discomfort.
- ✓ *Teething gels or ointment should only be used on the advice of your doctor or dentist.*
- ✓ Teething cookies or biscuits are **NOT** recommended for teething. They can stick to your baby's teeth and cause tooth decay.
- ✓ If your baby has fever or diarrhea when teething, contact your family doctor.
- ✓ Each child has their own schedule for cutting teeth. Most children begin teething at about 6 months and finish at 3 years.

Adapted from Health File #19a & Toddlers First Steps Province of BC

TIPS FOR BRUSHING

- ❖ Pick a time that works well for both you and your child.
- ❖ Make brushing a part of your child's daily routine
- ❖ Sing a song or tell a story to make brushing more enjoyable.
- ❖ Brush to music from the radio or favourite CD
- ❖ Use a facecloth or gauze if the toothbrush isn't accepted.
- ❖ Try a different toothpaste flavour. Many children find mint or cinnamon flavouring too "hot".
- ❖ Children need to have their teeth cleaned twice a day, everyday.

Adapted from www.interiorhealth.ca

Communities for Kids, in partnership with Success by 6®, engages families and communities in children's healthy early development

Dental Health and . . .

Infants (Birth to 12 months)

- Use a clean, damp baby facecloth to wipe your baby's gums once a day as soon after birth as possible
- Teething usually starts between 6-10 months. Once teeth appear, start cleaning with a soft toothbrush or wet cloth with a smear (size of a grain of rice) of fluoride toothpaste twice daily, morning and night.
- Visit the dentist 6 months after the first tooth erupts, which is usually by one year of age.
- Sipping on fruit juice, milk, and sweetened drinks continually throughout the day will increase your baby's risk for tooth decay. Start training to drink from a cup as early as 6-9 months of age to switch to a regular cup by 12-14 months of age.
- Offer water to quench thirst between meals. Limit milk and juice to regularly scheduled meal and snack times.
- Never put baby to bed with a bottle that contains fruit juice milk or sweetened drinks. When the liquid pools in the baby's mouth, this is a risk factor for decay. Diluted juice and milk can still cause tooth decay.

Toddlers (12 to 36 months)

- Your toddler should have all (20) of their baby teeth by three years of age.
- Daily oral care is important to keep the baby molars healthy until they naturally fall out at 10-12 years of age.
- Brush your toddler's teeth twice daily with a smear (about the size of a grain of rice) of fluoride toothpaste. Lift the lip to look for white or brown spots near the gum-line.
- Offer your toddler healthy snack foods such as vegetables, fruits and dairy products. Offer two to three snacks per day and vary the daily snack choices. Avoid foods high in sugar, sticky foods, and drinks that are acidic.
- Offer water to quench thirst between meals. Limit milk and juice to regularly scheduled meal and snack times.
- Your toddler can be drinking from a regular cup instead of a bottle or sip cup.
- Children should see the dentist at least once a year.

Preschool, Early School Years (3-5 yr old)

- Your preschooler now has all their baby teeth. Daily oral care is important to keep the baby molars healthy until they naturally fall out at 10-12 years of age.
- Preschoolers like to brush their own teeth but they still do not have the skill to effectively remove all the plaque. Parents need to finish the job. Brushing needs to be done twice daily with a pea sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Make an appointment if you notice any signs of early decay. It is very important to create a positive attitude about going to the dental office. The goal is to have your child visit the dentist before there is a problem.
- Healthy snacking is important as preschoolers like to eat frequently throughout the day. Offer two to three snacks per day and vary the daily snack choices with foods such as vegetables, fruits and dairy products.
- Limit milk and juice to regularly scheduled meal and snack times. Water only (not juice/milk/pop/flavored drinks) is recommended to quench thirst between meals.
- Avoid nibbling and sipping all day (grazing) to limit the number of 'acid attacks' to the teeth to reduce the risk of decay.
- Children should see the dentist at least once a year.

For more information visit www.interiorhealth.ca and click on "Choose Health" on the top of the page. Then click on "Dental Health". If you have questions, contact Karl Gunderson, Community Dental Hygienist, Penticton Health Centre, 250-770-3412.