

When Should I Start Brushing Baby's Teeth?

Parents should start brushing their children's teeth as soon as they appear in the mouth. It is also a good idea to use a clean finger or damp cloth to wipe a child's gums before teeth even appear. Flossing should be started after two teeth have erupted next to each other to prevent cavities between these teeth. Flossing is especially important for the molars as they are generally closer to each other than the front teeth. Oral hygiene becomes more important for children who drink a lot of juices and eat more sweet items.

Use a soft-bristled toothbrush and a very small, pea-sized amount of toothpaste. Milk and juice during the day are fine if you are brushing your child's teeth 2-3 times per day. Do not send your child to bed with a bottle of anything other than water.

As long as teeth are present, tooth decay is a concern. Sometimes brushing and flossing a child's teeth can be a battle of wills. Deciduous (baby) teeth play a very important role in child development and they should be given proper attention and care.



**The American
Dental Association
recommends that
a child be seen by
a dentist as soon
as their first tooth
erupts, but no
later than their
first birthday.**