



## A checklist for each stage

# Dental tips for parents

Your children need guidance to keep their teeth healthy and strong. Here's how you can help.

## Start early

- Your baby's dental health starts with the first tooth.
- When the first tooth erupts you can begin brushing using a smear of fluoride toothpaste no more than the size of a grain of rice.
- Brush your baby's teeth morning and night or as recommended by a dentist or physician.

## Age 3

- When brushing your child's teeth, only use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste if they can spit it out. If they can't spit, use less toothpaste.
- Help your child brush their teeth to ensure all areas are covered.
- Begin to floss teeth when your child has two teeth that touch. It helps to remove plaque that brushing alone can't remove.
- Offer your child healthy foods that have less sugar and aren't as sticky.

## Age 4

- Continue to help your child brush their teeth twice a day using a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste.
- Help your child with flossing at least once a day.
- Discourage your children from sucking their thumb or a pacifier.
- Talk to your child about how and when they lose their baby teeth.

## Age 6

- Continue to support their daily brushing and flossing routine.
- Help them stay safe with protective sports gear such as a helmet and mouth guard.
- Encourage healthy eating.

## Age 8

- Learn how to handle dental emergencies, and teach your child how to handle them.
- Start talking to your children about the dangers of vaping, cigarettes and other tobacco products.

## Age 10

- Continue to have conversations about about the dangers of smoking and tobacco products.
- Talk about the dangers of eating disorders and how it affects teeth.

## Adolescence

- Talk with your child about eating healthy and avoiding sugary foods and drinks.
- Emphasize the importance of wearing protective sports gear and seat belts to avoid injury to the face and mouth.
- Discuss the effects that eating disorders have on overall health and teeth.
- Discuss the dangers of tobacco and other drug use with your teen, especially opioids.
- Ask your child's oral surgeon about alternatives to opioids after wisdom tooth extraction.



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### Learn more

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