



Brushing

Infants (Birth–18 months)

Clean gums with a soft cloth until teeth begin to develop. At 4-7 months, teeth will begin to erupt. Start brushing your child's teeth for two minutes, twice daily with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.

Preschool (3–5 years)

By age 3, a full set of 20 primary teeth will be in place. Brush with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste, twice daily.

School-age to adulthood

Brush for two minutes, twice daily with fluoride toothpaste.



Flossing

Infants (Birth–18 months)

Too early to start flossing.

Preschool (3–5 years)

Help your child clean between their teeth with floss or a special brush once daily.

School-age to adulthood

Floss once daily.



Cleaning and Exams

Infants (Birth–18 months)

Visit the dentist when the first tooth erupts, and no later than your child's first birthday.

Preschool (3–5 years)

Be sure to take your child to the dentist two times per year, or as often as the dentist recommends.

School-age to adulthood

Visit the dentist regularly and be sure to take advantage of preventive care, which may detect problems before they become complex, painful or costly.



Fluoride

Infants (Birth–18 months)

Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste to brush your child's teeth once they erupt. Encourage drinking tap water instead of sugary beverages.

School-age through teens

Children who are at a higher risk for cavities should get two or more fluoride treatments each year.

Young adults to adulthood

Fluoride in your toothpaste and drinking water likely will be sufficient, but some higher-risk adults may need additional fluoride treatment.



Sealants

Infants-preschool (Birth-5 years)

Likely not needed, but consult with your dentist.

School-age through teens

Higher-risk children ages 6-9 should get sealants on their first molars and higher-risk children ages 10-14 should get sealants on their second molars.

Young adults to adulthood

Likely not needed, but consult your dentist.



Dry Mouth

Infants through young adults

Likely not applicable, but consult with your dentist should you have concerns.

Through adulthood

Dry mouth is often a normal part of aging and may lead to an increase in cavities. Many medications have side effects that may include dry mouth.



Complex Procedures

Infants through preschool (Birth-5 years)

Be sure to examine your child's mouth for changes and share anything concerning with your dentist.

School-age through teens

Encourage kids who participate in sports or other potentially dangerous activities to wear a mouth guard.

Young adults to adulthood

Visit your dentist regularly and be sure to take advantage of preventive care, which may detect problems before they become more complex, painful or costly. If you experience a change in your mouth, discuss it with your dentist.



Gum Disease

Infants (Birth-18 months)

Gum disease is often preventable. Avoid sharing eating utensils and bottles, and avoid "cleaning" your child's pacifier with your mouth.

Preschool-teens (3-18 years)

Frequent consumption of sugary foods and beverages can lead to cavities and gum disease. For children, teach them about how decay develops and model good oral health behavior. For teens, be sure to schedule preventive care and exams.

Young adults to adulthood

Gum disease can be prevented or easily treated if discovered early. Left untreated, it can lead to tissue, bone and tooth loss. Be sure to take advantage of preventive care and exams.



Basics

Infants (Birth-18 months)

Choose tap water for infants over sugary beverages and limit sugary foods. Pacifiers and thumb sucking can affect the placement of adult teeth, so have a plan to help your child give those up by age 2.

Preschool-young adults

Encourage choose tap water over sugary beverages and limit sugary and starchy foods. Avoid smoking and chewing tobacco.

Through adulthood

Choose tap water over sugary beverages and limit sugary and starchy foods. Talk to your dentist about health-related diagnoses you may be undergoing and medications you may be taking as part of treatment. Avoid smoking and chewing tobacco.



The Power of Smile™

Learn more about how your oral health connects to your overall health at:

DeltaDentalMN.org



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