



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

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

Break The Cycle

Don't Pass Cavities On To Your Child!

Delta Dental Community Outreach

GOING BEYOND BENEFITS

...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



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

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
- Ninety percent 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

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

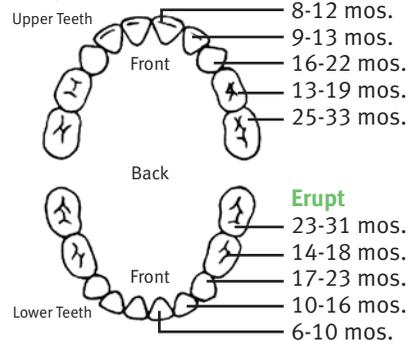
If you suspect gum disease, it is important for your teen to see a dentist

- 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



The Developing Smile

■ Baby Teeth

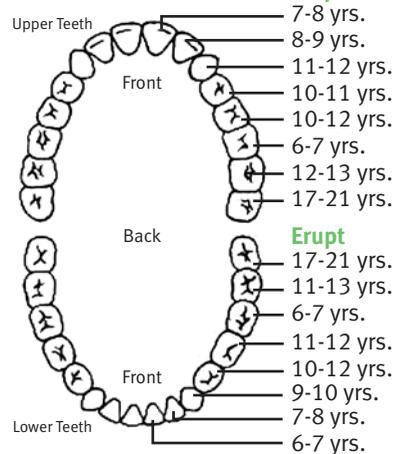


Erupt

Lose

- 6-7 yrs.
- 7-8 yrs.
- 10-12 yrs.
- 9-11 yrs.
- 10-12 yrs.

■ Permanent Teeth



Erupt

Lose

- 23-31 mos.
- 14-18 mos.
- 17-23 mos.
- 10-16 mos.
- 6-10 mos.
- 10-12 yrs.
- 9-11 yrs.
- 9-12 yrs.
- 7-8 yrs.
- 6-7 yrs.

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