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Child Dental Health

Healthy teeth are important to your child's overall health. From the time your child is born, there are things you can do to promote healthy teeth and prevent cavities [<https://medlineplus.gov/toothdecay.html>]. For babies, you should clean teeth with a soft, clean cloth or baby's toothbrush. Avoid putting the baby to bed with a bottle and check teeth regularly for spots or stains.

For all children, you should:

- Start using a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste when they are two years old. You might start sooner, if a dentist or doctor suggests it.
- Provide healthy foods and limit sweet snacks and drinks
- Schedule regular dental check-ups

Forming good habits at a young age can help your child have healthy teeth for life.

NIDCR: National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

Start Here

- About Kids' Teeth [<https://www.2min2x.org/about-kids-teeth/>] (Partnership for Healthy Mouths, Healthy Lives)
- Dental Hygiene: How to Care for Your Baby's Teeth [<https://familydoctor.org/dental-hygiene-how-to-care-for-your-babys-teeth/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/como-cuidar-los-dientes-de-su-bebe/?adfree=true>]
- Healthy Mouth for Kids: Start Early to Protect Tooth Health [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2023/02/healthy-mouth-kids>]
 (National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/ninos-con-bocas-saludables>]
- Healthy Mouth for Your Baby [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/healthy-mouth-for-baby-en.pdf>]
 (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research) - PDF
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2018-12/healthy-mouth-spanish.pdf>]
- How to Take Care of Your Teeth [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/teeth-care.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- Keeping Your Child's Teeth Healthy [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/healthy.html>]  (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/healthy.html>]
- Oral Health Tips for Children [<https://www.cdc.gov/oral-health/prevention/oral-health-tips-for-children.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Take Care of Your Child's Teeth [<https://odphp.health.gov/myhealthfinder/doctor-visits/regular-checkups/take-care-your-childs-teeth>] **Easy-to-Read** (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion)

Diagnosis and Tests

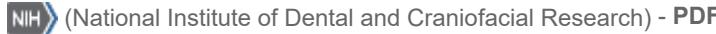
- Dental Exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/dental-exam/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/examen-dental/>]

- Panoramic Dental X-Ray [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/panoramic-xray>]

(American College of Radiology; Radiological Society of North America)

Also in Spanish [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/es/info/panoramic-xray>]

Prevention and Risk Factors

- How to Prevent Tooth Decay in Your Baby [<https://www.healthychildren.org/english/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/pages/how-to-prevent-tooth-decay-in-your-baby.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/paginas/how-to-prevent-tooth-decay-in-your-baby.aspx>]
- Let the Brushing Games Begin [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/Let-the-Brushing-Games-Begin.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/healthy-living/oral-health/paginas/let-the-brushing-games-begin.aspx>]
- Seal Out Tooth Decay [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/seal-out-tooth-decay-en.pdf>]  (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/selle-los-dientes-contra-la-caries-dental.pdf>]
- Tooth Decay [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/health-info/tooth-decay>]  (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/espanol/temas-de-salud/la-caries-dental>]

Related Issues

- About Dental Fluorosis [<https://www.cdc.gov/oral-health/about/about-dental-fluorosis.html>]
(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Safely Soothing Teething Pain in Infants and Children [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/safely-soothing-teething-pain-infants-and-children>] (Food and Drug Administration)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/articulos-para-el-consumidor-en-espanol/alivie-el-dolor-de-la-denticion-de-los-bebes-y-los-ninos-de-una-manera-segura>]
- Teething & Dental Hygiene for Young Children [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/Teething-and-Dental-Hygiene.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/healthy-living/oral-health/paginas/teething-and-dental-hygiene.aspx>]
- Toothache: First Aid [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-toothache/basics/ART-20056628?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/first-aid/first-aid-toothache/basics/art-20056628?p=1>]

Statistics and Research

- FastStats: Oral and Dental Health [<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/dental.htm>] (National Center for Health Statistics)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Child Dental Health [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=dental&aggFilters=ages:child,status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Pit and Fissure Sealants [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?intr=%22Pit+and+Fissure+Sealants%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Parental perceptions of ultrasonography in pediatric dental diagnostics: a cross-sectional study. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40676547>]
- Article: Evaluation of dental treatments under nitrous oxide-oxygen inhalation sedation in pediatric... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40670963>]
- Article: Early prevention from the first tooth - what do German dental... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40604931>]

Child Dental Health -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Dental+Care+for+Children%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Reference Desk

- Mouth and Teeth (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/mouth-teeth.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/mouth-teeth.html>]

Find an Expert

- Find a Pediatric Dentist [<https://www.aapd.org/publications/find-a-pd/>] (American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry)
- Find an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon [<https://myoms.org/find-a-surgeon/>] (American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons)
- National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/>] 
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/espanol>]

Finance and Policy

- Where Can I Find Low-Cost Dental Care? [<https://www.hhs.gov/answers/health-insurance-reform/where-can-i-find-low-cost-dental-care/index.html>] (Department of Health and Human Services)

Children

- How to Take Care of Your Teeth [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/teeth-care.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- What's Spit? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/spit.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/spit.html>]
- Your Teeth [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/teeth.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/teeth.html>]

Teenagers

- Dental Health and Orthodontic Problems [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/Dental-Health-and-Orthodontic-Problems.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)
- Taking Care of Your Teeth [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/teeth.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/teeth.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Brushing Your Child's Teeth [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000769.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000769.htm>]
- Dental care - child [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002213.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/002213.htm>]
- Fluoride in diet [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002420.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/002420.htm>]
- Healthy Mouth for Your Baby [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/healthy-mouth-for-baby-en.pdf>]
 (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2018-12/healthy-mouth-spanish.pdf>]
- Healthy Smile for Your Young Child: Tips to Keep Your Child Healthy [<https://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/childbrochure.pdf>] (National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center) - **PDF**
Also in Spanish [https://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/childbrochure_sp.pdf]
- Seal Out Tooth Decay [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2024-10/seal-out-tooth-decay-en.pdf>]
 (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research) - **PDF**

Also in Spanish [<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/selle-los-dientes-contra-la-caries-dental.pdf>]

- Teething [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002045.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/002045.htm>]
- Tooth decay -- early childhood [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000721.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000721.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

[Brushing Your Child's Teeth](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000769.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000769.htm>]

[Dental care - child](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002213.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002213.htm>]

[Fluoride in diet](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002420.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002420.htm>]

[Natal teeth](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003268.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003268.htm>]

[Teething](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002045.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002045.htm>]

[Tooth decay -- early childhood](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000721.htm) [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000721.htm>]

Related Health Topics

[Dental Health](https://medlineplus.gov/dentalhealth.html) [<https://medlineplus.gov/dentalhealth.html>]

[Gum Disease](https://medlineplus.gov/gumdisease.html) [<https://medlineplus.gov/gumdisease.html>]

[Orthodontia](https://medlineplus.gov/orthodontia.html) [<https://medlineplus.gov/orthodontia.html>]

[Tooth Decay](https://medlineplus.gov/toothdecay.html) [<https://medlineplus.gov/toothdecay.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Child Dental Health* is the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research [<http://www.nidcr.nih.gov/>]

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/childdentalhealth.html>] on *Child Dental Health*

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