

# Oral Health For Kids

Good oral health should begin before their first tooth appears

## Birth to 6 months:

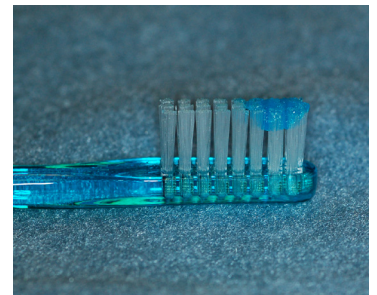
Baby teeth are important. They help your child talk, eat, and grow.

- Wipe your baby's gums with a clean, damp washcloth after feedings.
- Don't put baby's pacifier in your mouth to clean.
- Clean pacifiers with warm soapy water.
- Avoid sharing utensils and cups.



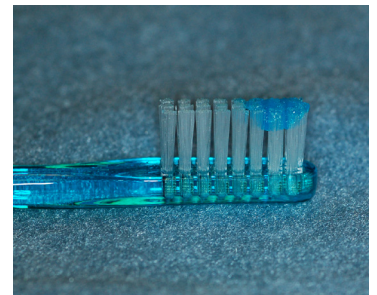
## 6 months to 1 year:

- Brush your baby's teeth with a smear or rice-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Put your baby to bed with hugs and love, not a bottle.
- Once a month, check for white or brown spots along the gum line. The spots may be signs that cavities are forming. Contact your baby's dentist or pediatrician if you see anything unusual.
- Avoid foods and drinks containing sugar during the first year



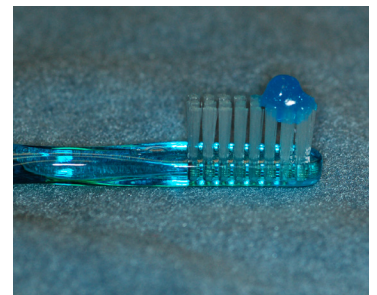
## 1-3 years:

- Schedule the first dental visit by your baby's first birthday.
- Wean your toddler off the bottle.
- Give your child tap water, especially if it has fluoride in it. Avoid sweetened drinks.
- Brush your child's teeth twice a day with a smear of toothpaste with fluoride.
- Schedule dental checkups every six months.



## 3-6 years:

- All 20 baby teeth are usually in place by three years of age.
- Teach your child to brush twice a day with a pea-sized amount of toothpaste with fluoride.
- Give healthy snacks like cheese, vegetable sticks, or fresh fruit.
- Give your child tap water, especially if it has fluoride in it. Avoid sweetened drinks.
- Schedule dental checkups every six months.



## Resources

- If your child is enrolled in Medical Assistance or in the Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP), your child has dental coverage. To find a dentist in your area, visit: [health.maryland.gov/mmcp/Pages/maryland-healthy-smiles-dental-program.aspx](https://health.maryland.gov/mmcp/Pages/maryland-healthy-smiles-dental-program.aspx)
- Your child may be eligible for Medical Assistance or MCHP even if you are not. The best way to know if you or your child is eligible is to apply. Visit [Maryland Health Connection](#) to apply.

