



Parental Guide for Children Dental Care

照顧孩子的口腔衛生(英文)

Things to Know Prior to Birth

It is best to establish an oral preventive care plan for your child prior to his/her birth. The earlier parents learn the methods of baby's oral care, the more chance the children's teeth are in good health.

Infants (0 - 1 year old)

Before the baby's teeth come in, a gentle massage of the baby's gum with moist gauze each time after milk-feeding can keep the baby's mouth clean and facilitate tooth eruption. When the baby's teeth start to emerge at six months of age, a moist gauze or finger glove should be used to clean the teeth. Toothpaste is not required. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry suggests that parents should take the babies with erupted primary teeth (baby's teeth) or the child of one year of age to visit the dentist for the first time. Parents can learn oral hygiene care measures and have their babies to be checked for baby bottle tooth decay. This first good visit will help the baby get familiar with the dentist and the dental office. No fear of the dentist makes a foundation for a kid regarding the future dental checkups and treatments.

Toddlers (1 - 3 years old)

Baby's teeth complete eruption at about two years of age. If the child is able to gargle, he/she can learn to use toothbrush with toothpaste. To prevent the child from swallowing too much toothpaste, only one peanut-sized amount of toothpaste is enough. Since toddlers are incapable of brushing their teeth perfectly, parents should always check and re-brush

their child's teeth. Daily use of dental floss is also recommended. This can be done with the child lying on the parent's lap. Children's resistance to tooth-cleaning is commonly encountered, and parents' praise or positive feedbacks can help them learn and enjoy these procedures.

Preschool Children (3 - 6 years old)

Most kids at this age are able to brush their teeth on their own. However, parents should still check, and re-brush if needed. Standing behind the child and using the left hand to stabilize their heads can facilitate re-brushing. Aside from fluoridated toothpastes, parents should also help their children with dental flossing. For the children with severe tooth decay, fluoridated mouthwash or fluoride varnish provides supplementary care. Please consult the pediatric dentist for the recommended way of use.

School Children (6 - 12 years old)

Despite the children's better skills in taking care of teeth, parents should not stop paying attention to their oral health. Diet also plays an important role since junk food and lack of proper oral hygiene care lead to bad oral health. Make sure that the kids brush teeth and floss regularly and thoroughly. If needed, a plaque-disclosing solution can help detect the plaque-accumulated areas which need further cleaning. For the kids with good oral hygiene, fluoridated toothpastes should be used in the morning and at night. For the kids prone to tooth decay, fluoride varnish or fluoridated mouthwash should be utilized as a supplementary care. The children receiving orthodontic treatment (braces) should also use fluoridated mouthwash because they have higher risks of getting tooth decay.

Adolescents (13 - 19 years old)

The main concern for teenagers' oral health is the dental problem caused by poor dietary habits and hormonal changes. Parents should pay more attention to the children's habits of consuming junk food and the motivation of cleaning the teeth. Wisdom teeth are another potential source of dental problem. Since wisdom teeth typically appear between the ages of 17 and 25, a dental checkup at 17 years of age is advised no matter the teeth are symptomatic or not.