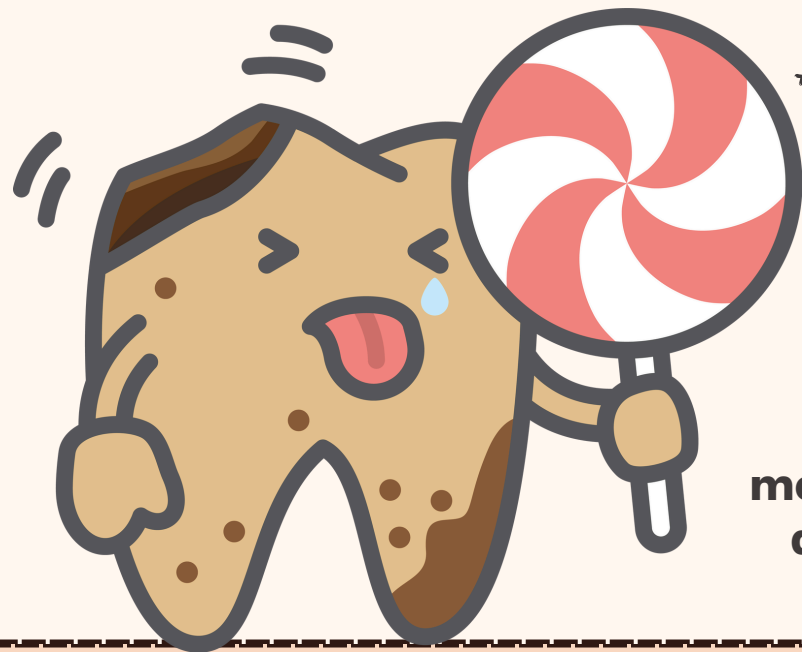




A GUIDE TO HEALTHY TEETH FOR KIDS UNDER 5

KEEPING LITTLE TEETH HEALTHY

Teeth are vulnerable to decay as soon as they begin to emerge, which typically happens around 6 months of age, though the timing can vary. Decay is often aggressive and usually targets the upper front teeth. A common cause is a condition known as baby bottle syndrome, which happens when bottles or pacifiers are used for extended periods, especially with sugary drinks. In severe cases, the decay can progress to the point where the teeth cannot be saved and must be removed. Proper care is essential -- this guide will show how to keep young teeth strong and healthy!



Tooth Decay

#1

most common chronic
disease in children

HOW TO BRUSH: TIPS FOR KIDS & PARENTS

Link to demonstration video: <https://youtu.be/vcNAhUqH9U0?t=55>

Correct Amount of Toothpaste for Young Children

Use a thin smear for children under age 3

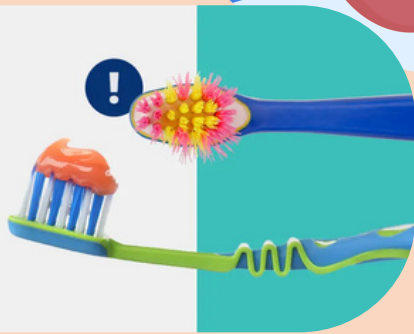
Use a pea-sized amount for children ages 3-6



© Dear Doctor.

3 months

Ideally, you should replace your child's toothbrush every **three months** or when the bristles start to **wear down and fray**.



SHOPPING FOR HEALTHY SMILES



ONE YEAR



2+ YEARS



CHILDREN UNDER 3

Birth to First Tooth (0-6 Months)

- Clean gums after feedings with a damp cloth or gauze, especially before bed.

When Teeth Appear (Around 6 Months)

- Use a soft infant toothbrush with water or a rice-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Brush gently in small circles twice daily (morning and before bed).

Ages 1-3 Years

- Use a rice-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Brush twice daily for 2 minutes (morning and night).
- Supervise brushing, encourage spitting, and avoid rinsing to keep fluoride on teeth.
- Schedule the first dental visit by age 1 or 6 months after the first tooth erupts.

CHILDREN AGES 3-5

- Switch to a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Help your child brush for 2 minutes twice daily.
- Begin teaching proper brushing technique with supervision.
- Introduce flossing when teeth start to touch.
- Avoid sugary snacks and replace toothbrushes every 3 months.

PRODUCT AND COSTS

- Finger brush (\$3-\$10)
- Manual toothbrush (\$0.99 to \$4.75)
- Kids' electric toothbrush (\$5.99-\$49.99 depending on features & brand)
- Replacement heads typically cost around \$5 each
- Toothpaste types xylitol (\$6-\$14) vs fluoride (\$4-\$10)
- Kids' flossers (\$0.03-\$0.35 per flosser)
- Mouth rinse is NOT advised for children under 6 (ADA, 2021)



PLACES TO SHOP

- Amazon
- Wal-Mart
- Target
- Local Grocers (Whole Foods, Safeway, etc.)
- Local Pharmacies (CVS, Walgreen's, etc.)
- Oral-B
- Sonicare

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IMPORTANT BRUSHING REMINDERS



Supervise & teach

BOTTLE HABITS + DIET

- limit sugary/sticky foods and drinks
- encourage calcium-rich foods to strengthen teeth
- include crunchy fruits and veggies (e.g. apples)
- avoid bedtime bottles (esp. with juice or soda)
- no shared bottles, utensils or pacifiers to prevent bacterial contamination

- Children under the age of 5 lack fine motor skills needed to be effective (usually develop around age 8)
- Adults should directly assist, demonstrate, and/or supervise
- Make sure children do not consume excessive fluoride via swallowing toothpaste or mouthwash (not recommended at this age)*
- Make brushing fun with songs, creative flavors, and colorful characters

*Excessive fluoride consumption may result in fluorosis

Table 4: Daily Tolerable Upper Intake Levels for Fluoride [1]

Age	Male	Female	Pregna
Birth to 6 months	0.7 mg	0.7 mg	
7-12 months	0.9 mg	0.9 mg	
1-3 years	1.3 mg	1.3 mg	
4-8 years	2.2 mg	2.2 mg	