



DENTAL ADVICE FOR 0-5 YEAR OLD CHILDREN

POND SQUARE DENTAL

WHAT IS TEETHING?

Teething is the process through which an infant's primary teeth, also known as milk teeth, emerge through the gums. Most children begin teething between four and seven months of age, and all twenty primary teeth typically erupt by around three years old.

SIGNS OF TEETHING

- Increased drooling
- Chewing on objects
- Irritability or restlessness
- Swollen or tender gums
- Disrupted sleep
- Reduced appetite or refusal to eat
- Slight increase in body temperature

HOW TO COMFORT YOUR CHILD

- Offer a chilled (not frozen) teething ring to soothe their gums.
- Gently massage the gums with a clean finger or a soft, damp cloth.
- A natural teething gel such as Gengigel may help relieve discomfort.



EVERY BABY IS DIFFERENT

Some babies experience minimal symptoms, while others require more support. You may need to try a combination of the above approaches to find what works best for your child

THUMB-SUCKING

Thumb-sucking is a natural reflex that provides comfort and reassurance to babies and young children. Most children naturally stop between the ages of two and four.

If the habit continues beyond this stage, it can lead to:

- Misalignment of the teeth
- Changes in jaw structure
- Speech difficulties

HELPING YOUR CHILD TO STOP THUMB-SUCKING

- Identify when and why your child sucks their thumb, and address possible triggers such as boredom, anxiety, or tiredness.
- Offer gentle praise and positive reinforcement.
- Use thumb covers or mittens at night if needed.
- In some cases, your dentist may recommend a habit-breaking appliance to support your child in stopping.

TONGUE TIE

Tongue-tie is a condition present from birth where the band of tissue (lingual frenulum) connecting the tongue to the base of the mouth is too short, thick, or tight. This can restrict movement and affect feeding or speech.

TREATMENT

A dentist can diagnose tongue-tie and perform a simple procedure to release the tissue. The process takes only a few minutes, causes minimal discomfort, and babies can usually feed immediately afterwards.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Difficulty latching or feeding
- Poor weight gain
- Speech delay or articulation issues
- Trouble eating certain foods
- Tongue appearing heart-shaped when extended



HOW SHOULD I CARE FOR MY CHILD’S TEETH AND GUMS?

- Begin brushing as soon as the first tooth appears.
- Brush twice daily — before breakfast and before bedtime.



WHAT CAN I DO IF MY CHILD REFUSES TO HAVE THEIR TEETH BRUSHED?

- Let them watch you brush your own teeth to set a good example.
- Make it fun by using a toothbrushing song or timer.
- Allow them to choose their toothbrush to encourage participation.
- A hygienist can demonstrate techniques during an appointment.

If your child continues to resist, stay patient and consistent. Forcing brushing can create negative associations. Try turning it into a game or use a reward chart to encourage cooperation.



DIETARY ADVICE

- Limit the amount of sugary foods and drinks your child consumes.
- Offer milk and water instead of sugary or acidic drinks.
- The frequency of eating and drinking (apart from water) is a major factor in tooth decay.

TOOTHBRUSHING ADVICE

- Use an age-appropriate toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles.
- For children under two years of age, use a smear of toothpaste containing 1,000 ppm fluoride.
- For children aged three and over, use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste containing fluoride.
- Encourage your child to spit out the toothpaste but not to rinse afterwards.
- Brush twice daily, before breakfast and before bed.
- Supervise brushing until at least seven years of age.

WHEN SHOULD I TAKE MY CHILD TO SEE THE DENTIST?

Your child should visit the dentist when their first tooth appears or by their first birthday. Early visits help your child feel comfortable in the dental setting and allow the dentist to provide advice on caring for their teeth and gums and spot any developmental anomalies.

Routine check-ups every six months help monitor growth and spot early habits, such as thumb-sucking or dummy use.

These visits also allow the dentist to discuss preventive care, including fluoride treatments to strengthen enamel and protect against decay.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A CHECK-UP?

At your child's appointment, the dentist will:

- Examine the teeth, gums, tongue, and jaw development.
- Take X-rays if necessary to assess for decay or misalignment.
- Discuss findings and provide advice on habits and diet.

TELL-SHOW-DO TECHNIQUE

This method helps children understand what will happen during a dental visit:

- Tell: The dentist explains what will be done using simple, friendly language.
- Show: The dentist demonstrates the tools or procedure on a model or finger.
- Do: The dentist then carries out the procedure as described.





WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS AFRAID OF THE DENTIST?

Talk about the appointment positively, describing it as a fun visit.

Reassure them they will get to “ride in the dentist’s chair”.

Break appointments into smaller visits if necessary – the first to look around, the second to sit in the chair, and the third to have a brief examination.

FLUORIDE APPLICATION

Fluoride varnish is a protective treatment applied to strengthen tooth enamel, prevent decay, and reduce sensitivity. After cleaning, the dentist applies the varnish using a soft brush.

Your child should avoid eating, drinking, or rinsing their mouth for thirty minutes to allow the fluoride to penetrate.

Children at higher risk of decay may need fluoride application every three to six months, while others may only require it once a year.

DENTAL X-RAYS

Dental X-rays are an important tool for detecting cavities and assessing tooth and jaw development. The level of radiation exposure is very low, and your dentist will only take X-rays when clinically necessary.

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