

# Children's Dental Timeline

United **Concordia**  
dental<sup>SM</sup>



0-4  
MONTHS

Establish an oral hygiene routine before teeth come in, so it's easier to maintain one as baby grows. Gently wipe the gums with a clean, soft cloth twice a day for 2 – 3 seconds.<sup>1</sup>



4-6  
MONTHS

Continue wiping the gums while also cleaning new teeth to remove cavity-causing plaque.<sup>3</sup> Practice this routine twice a day, especially after baby eats and before bedtime.



1  
YEAR

When teeth come in, start brushing them twice a day with a small, soft-bristled toothbrush and plain water. Help your child until they have good brushing skills.<sup>4</sup>



2-3  
YEARS

At 2 years old, your child can start using a pea-sized squeeze of fluoride toothpaste. Make sure to teach them to rinse and spit it out. Once the teeth fit together snugly, help your child floss once a day.<sup>2</sup> By age 3, all 20 baby teeth should be in. If not, visit the dentist for evaluation.<sup>5</sup>



3-6  
YEARS

Let your child try to brush themselves and help with any missed areas.<sup>4</sup> Continue to help with flossing, too. Ask your dentist when to get the first dental X-rays and if dental sealants would be beneficial.<sup>4</sup>



6-10  
YEARS

Baby teeth will start to fall out.<sup>6</sup> While your child may brush and floss fine themselves, adult supervision is still important. Make sure they're using proper techniques and not skipping their routine.



10+  
YEARS

By age 12 or 13, have your dentist check that all permanent teeth — except wisdom teeth — are in place. They'll watch for wisdom teeth during teenage and early adult years, as they may need to be removed.<sup>7</sup>



## Teeth tips

### Avoid baby tooth decay

Don't put baby to sleep with a bottle of sugary or carb-filled liquids, such as milk, formula, or fruit juice. And don't dip a pacifier in sugar or honey. Sugary substances can feed bacteria, leading to cavities.<sup>2</sup>

### Baby's first dental exam

You can schedule as soon as the first tooth comes in, but no later than baby's first birthday.<sup>3</sup> Ask your dentist how often you should visit, typically every 6 months to once a year.

### Time to break the habit

If your child is still using a pacifier or sucking their thumb after age 3, talk to your dentist.<sup>5</sup>

### Make brushing fun

Test your child's skills with disclosing tablets, which use harmless dyes to turn missed plaque fun colors. Or download our Chomper Chums<sup>®</sup> app with cartoon characters who motivate and teach proper technique.

### When to consider braces

Even if your child's teeth look straight, it's not a bad idea to consult an orthodontist. Around age 7, they can check for structural issues with the teeth or whether braces, a retainer, or other procedures are needed.<sup>7</sup>

1. Child Dental Health; MedlinePlus; July 2018. 2. Tips for Parents: Tooth Decay; American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry; 2023. 3. Dental Hygiene: How to Care for Your Baby's Teeth; familydoctor.org; July 2023. 4. Children's Oral Health; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2022. 5. Infant and Children's Oral Health; New York State Department of Health; August 2019. 6. Anatomy and Development of the Mouth and Teeth; Johns Hopkins Medicine; 2024. 7. Four Developmental Milestones in Your Child's Oral Health; Colgate; November 2022.