

Dear Parents,

All teeth are important, even primary teeth! Promote strong teeth and gums by helping children brush and floss every day. Young children need adult help to brush properly. Let children try to brush their teeth by themselves. Then, you should follow-up by brushing their teeth again and flossing between teeth.

- Page 2 - Brush your teeth every day.** Children (and adults) should brush their teeth at least twice each day. Brush after meals and snacks if possible. If they cannot brush, then help them rinse the mouth with water. Always brush teeth just before going to bed.
- Page 3 - Put toothpaste on the toothbrush.** Just a *tiny smear* of toothpaste is enough! Choose a toothpaste that is labeled “ADA approved” and which contains fluoride. Fluoride helps strengthen teeth.
- Page 4 - Put the toothbrush against your teeth.** Use a toothbrush with soft bristles. Gently move the brush in a circular motion over teeth and gums. Be sure to get a new toothbrush every 3 or 4 months, or sooner if the brush bristles are worn.
- Page 5 - Brush every tooth.** Brush the front, back, and top of every tooth. Teach children to brush three or four teeth 10 times, and then move on to the next 3-4 teeth. Gently brush the gums to help keep them healthy. Then brush the tongue to get rid of bacteria that can cause cavities.
- Page 6 - Spit out the toothpaste.** Children should spit out toothpaste after brushing, but not rinse. Most toothpaste contains fluoride and fluoride is good for your teeth. But, if children swallow toothpaste every day, they could get too much fluoride. This can cause stains or discoloration on teeth. Young children should not use mouthwash until they know how to “swish and spit.” Many mouthwash products contain alcohol and/or fluoride, which should be spit out – not swallowed.
- Page 7 - Flossing cleans between the teeth.** Flossing helps remove food and plaque from between the teeth where brushing cannot reach. You need to floss once the child has two teeth that touch.
- Ask your dentist how often your child should return for checkups and treatments. Always consult a dentist if your child has tooth or mouth pain or obvious dental problems.**

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Tooth Care



Part of the *HIP on Health* series
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every day.**



**Brush after eating, and
before going to bed.**

**Flossing cleans between
your teeth.**



**Ask an adult to help
you floss!**

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and tongue, too



Spit out the toothpaste.

Put toothpaste on
the toothbrush.



Use a tiny smear of
toothpaste!

Place the toothbrush
against your teeth.



Gently move the
toothbrush in a
circular motion.

Brush the front,
the back, and the
top of every tooth!



Brush every tooth
ten times!