



Parent's Concerns Answered

Parents' Top Concerns & Recommendations from the American Academy Pediatric Dentists

1. Issues relating to cavities

"It is reasonable to expect that a child can graduate from high school without any cavities. However, this result requires a strong partnership between parent, child and pediatric dentist." -AAPD

- Infants Birth - 24 months
 - ▶ Clean child's mouth with a gauze pad or infant washcloth after feedings and before bedtime.
 - ▶ If necessary, begin fluoride supplements as prescribed by Dr. Adams.
- Children 2-6 years
 - ▶ Sealants (a protective coating that covers the teeth) for primary molars can be provided by Dr. Adams, as appropriate.
 - ▶ Continue fluoride supplements, if necessary.
 - ▶ Limit snacks between meals to 3-4 per day.
- Children 6-12 years
 - ▶ Sealants for permanent molars can be provided by Dr. Adams, as appropriate.
 - ▶ Continue fluoride supplements, if necessary.

2. Issues dealing with proper brushing and flossing techniques

"The most important factor in thorough oral hygiene is that parents actually perform the day-to-day tasks of brushing and flossing for their children, until they are competent to do so on their own." -AAPD

- Infants 2 - 24 months
 - ▶ Begin brushing any teeth with a soft-bristled infant toothbrush.
 - ▶ Continue cleaning other areas of mouth with a gauze pad or infant washcloth after feedings and before bedtime.
- Children 2-6 years
 - ▶ Parent continues responsibility for cleaning child's mouth, allowing child to participate, according to interest and dexterity.
 - ▶ Begin using pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste -- parent must ensure that all toothpaste is rinsed or wiped from mouth after brushing.
 - ▶ Begin flossing in any areas where teeth are touching.
- Children 6 - 12 years
 - ▶ Begin transferring responsibility for brushing to child, with parent supervision. The average child can brush thoroughly and properly on own at age 8.
 - ▶ Child should brush with the type of toothbrush and technique recommended by Dr. Adams.
 - ▶ Begin transferring responsibility for flossing to child, with parent supervision. The average child can floss thoroughly and properly on own at age 10.

3. Maintaining of healthy teeth and gums

"The key to healthy teeth and gums for your child is to begin the oral care routine as soon as possible, schedule regular preventive dental check-ups, and follow the advice given by the pediatric dentist." -AAPD

- Infants 6 - 24 months
 - ▶ Schedule consultation with Dr. Adams when the first tooth appears.
 - ▶ Follow schedule of periodic professional consultations, as advised by Dr. Adams.
- Children 2-6 years
 - ▶ Follow schedule of professional visits and preventive treatments (cleaning, topical fluoride treatments, x-rays), as recommended by Dr. Adams.
- Children 6 -12 years
 - ▶ Continue professional visits and preventative treatments, as recommended by Dr. Adams.

"A key lesson for parents to understand is that a child's healthy oral care pattern can easily be established if behaviors are taught in stages that parallel the child's development. By following the guidelines outlined above, parents can help their child master healthy behaviors in the oral care routine." -AAPD

