



Your Child's Teeth

The three to six year old

Healthy teeth make a healthy body

By the age of three, most children will have all 20 baby teeth. These baby teeth are for eating, talking and to hold a space for the permanent (adult) teeth. Healthy baby teeth are key for healthy adult teeth.

Children will want to brush their own teeth.

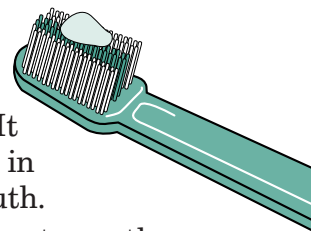
This is great but they are too young to do a good job.

Parents need to continue to brush at this age.

See your dental professional for help on how to brush your child's teeth and gums.

How to brush

- Choose a small toothbrush with soft bristles.
- Choose a toothpaste containing **fluoride**.
- Put toothpaste the size of a pea on the toothbrush.
- Lay your child down as shown in this picture. It helps you to see in your child's mouth.
- Use a clean finger to gently pull aside the lip.
- Clean every surface of every tooth.
- Brush your child's teeth in the morning after breakfast and again before bed.
- Start flossing once a day as soon as teeth touch together.



Read the label on the toothpaste. Be sure it is recommended by the Canadian Dental Association (CDA) for young children, and contains **fluoride**.

Some hints to make brushing fun:

- Let your child pick a favourite colored small, soft toothbrush.
- Try a different flavoured toothpaste.
- Sing a song, tell a story or play children's music while brushing.
- Have your child pick a new toothbrush every 2-3 months.

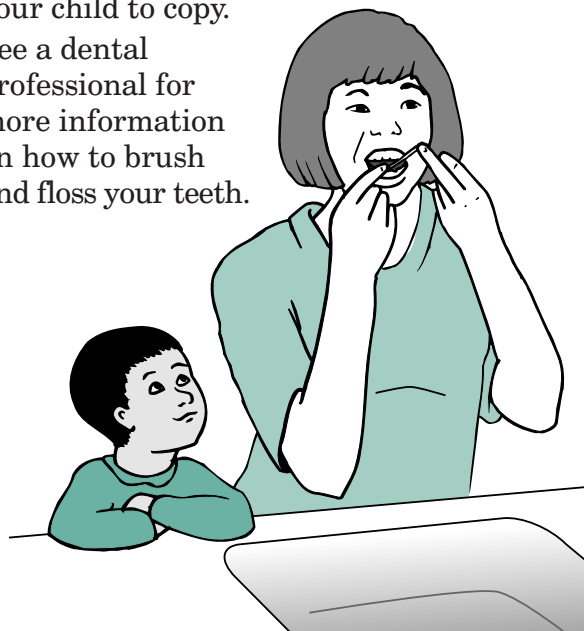
Healthy food for healthy teeth

- Follow the Canada Food Guide and offer a variety of healthy foods daily. Remember to brush after eating sticky foods (especially sweet food).
- Offer water to thirsty children. Limit juice to 1/2 cup a day and serve at mealtimes.



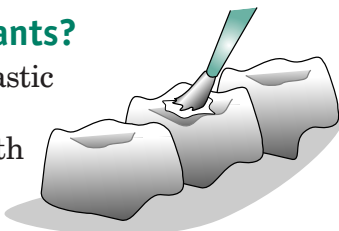
What a parent can do:

- It's now recommended that children begin dental visits around their first birthday.
- Make regular dental visits at least once a year.
- Be a good role model. Brush and floss your own teeth. This sets a good example for your child to copy.
- See a dental professional for more information on how to brush and floss your teeth.



What are fissure sealants?

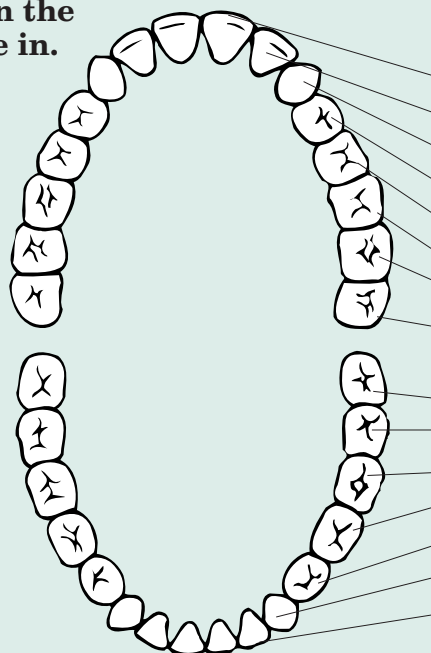
- Fissure sealants are plastic coatings placed in the grooves of the back teeth to prevent tooth decay.
- The sealant covers the chewing or biting surfaces.
- Ask the dentist if fissure sealants are suitable for your child.



Permanent teeth start to come in soon.

This chart shows when the permanent teeth come in.

- Most children lose the first baby tooth around age five or six.
- A permanent or adult tooth comes into this space.
- Four permanent back teeth come in around age six without a baby tooth falling out.
- The last baby teeth fall out around 12 years of age.
- Permanent teeth are meant to last throughout your child's life.



Permanent teeth

Upper teeth

Teeth	Teeth come in
Central incisor	7-8 years
Lateral incisor	8-9 years
Canine (cuspid)	11-12 years
First premolar (first bicuspid)	10-11 years
Second premolar (second bicuspid)	10-12 years
First molar	6-7 years
Second molar	12-13 years
Third molar (wisdom tooth)	17-21 years

Lower teeth

Third molar (wisdom tooth)	17-21 years
Second molar	11-13 years
First molar	6-7 years
Second premolar (second bicuspid)	11-12 years
First premolar (first bicuspid)	10-12 years
Canine (cuspid)	9-10 years
Lateral incisor	7-8 years
Central incisor	6-7 years

Other factsheets on caring for your child's teeth include:

HED.705 Mouth Care for Your Infant and HED.707 Preventing Early Childhood Tooth Decay

For further information contact your family dentist or a Community Dental Health Program

Other fact sheets are available at your local Community Health Office/Centre or online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca>

For more copies, go online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca> or email pheh@vch.ca and quote Catalogue No. HED.709

© Vancouver Coastal Health, May 2008