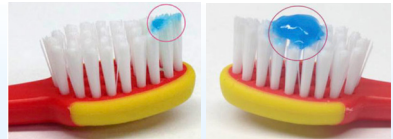


How to Care for Your Baby's Teeth:

Start brushing your baby's teeth when the first tooth breaks through!

Many parents began toothbrushing later than recommended. Start brushing with a children's fluoride toothpaste. Use a soft infant toothbrush and put an amount that is the size of a grain of rice. Too much fluoride can cause abnormal color and pitting of the teeth known as *dental fluorosis*. After age 3 years you can use a pea size amount of toothpaste but they shouldn't swallow it.

by Doug Puder, MD

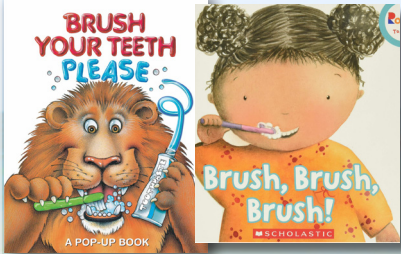


under age 3

over age 3

What if my baby or toddler refuses to let me brush?

Show your baby or toddler how you brush your own teeth, or pretend to brush a favorite stuffed animal's teeth, or try reading stories about brushing. Praise them for trying to brush their own teeth, but you need to brush for them afterwards. It's one of those things that you must make happen no matter how they feel about it (like you must stop them from running out in the street)! Once they learn that tantrums don't get them out of brushing their teeth, they will accept it.



Take your toddler for a first dental appointment by age 1-2 years:

Either your pediatrician or dentist should be checking the teeth at age one and discussing tooth care. Fluoride Varnish should be applied every 6 months to all children under age 5. We are looking into performing this service in our office, but as of now you will need to see a dentist.



Prescription Vitamins with Fluoride:

We don't recommend fluoride rinses. We will prescribe fluoride supplements starting at age 6 months and continue it until teenage. It has been proven to be safe and it makes the developing teeth stronger. Fluoride supplements will decrease cavities by 50% over your's child's life! Over 200 million people in this country have drinking water with fluoride. Unfortunately, there is no fluoride in the drinking water for Bergen, Rockland, and Orange counties.



Prevent Milk Bottle or Night Nursing Cavities:

ECC, early childhood caries (cavities) also known as nursing bottle caries or baby bottle tooth decay, is a disease that affects teeth in children aged between birth and age 5. After brushing your baby or toddler's teeth at bedtime, do not give any bottles or nurse until morning. Milk bottle rot can be quite horrible and require surgery! There is no nutritional need to feed your baby at night beyond the age of 4 months. We want to see toddlers off bottles completely by 18 months. That goes for pacifiers too!



Cold Teething Rings for Teething Pain:

Teething begins months before the first teeth erupt and continues off and on for several years. Cold teething rings and tylenol should help. Teething is not a cause of fever!



It's just as important as caring for adult teeth!

We hope you find our Parentletter helpful and informative. Please keep in mind that receipt of this newsletter does not create a doctor/patient relationship and that it is not meant to serve as a substitute for professional medical advice. For particular pediatric medical concerns, including decisions about diagnoses, medications and other treatments, or if you have any questions after reading this newsletter, we encourage you to speak with your child's pediatrician.