



PROTECT THAT *Precious Smile!*

Children need baby teeth for eating, speaking, and growing. Baby teeth also hold space for future adult teeth. Taking care of a child's baby teeth is important for a lifetime of healthy smiles. Here is some helpful information you can use to protect that precious smile.

Fluoride Does it Best

- Brush your child's teeth twice a day using toothpaste with fluoride.
- Fluoride is a mineral that is found naturally in the environment. Fluoride is safe and it works to prevent tooth decay (cavities).
- Make sure your child has fluoride in their drinking water.



- Ask your child's medical provider if they offer fluoride varnish. Fluoride varnish is a safe, painless, temporary protective coating that is painted on a child's teeth to make them stronger.

BUILD HEALTHY SMILES

Good oral health starts at home with your help! Here are some helpful things you can start doing today to build a happy, healthy smile:



Don't rinse your child's teeth after brushing with the right amount of fluoride toothpaste.



Use pacifiers safely until 1 year of age. Do not dip pacifiers in honey or anything sweet or sugary.



Schedule regular dental visits starting at age 1.



Don't put your child to bed with any food or drinks other than water.



Wean your child from a bottle to a drinking cup at age 1.



Provide water between meals, not milk or juice.



Limit sugary foods and drinks.

Tips for Teething Tots

Teething usually starts around 6 to 8 months of age and can be painful. You can ease your child's teething pain with plastic and rubber toys designed specifically for teething, a cold compress, gentle massage, and pain relievers when directed by your child's dental or medical provider.

Do not use numbing gels or creams. These can be dangerous for infants and toddlers. Diarrhea, vomiting, and a fever over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit are not normal during teething. If your child is having any of these issues during teething, call your child's medical provider.

Wondering what to expect during teething? It's normal for your child to experience the following:



FUSSINESS



DROOLING MORE THAN NORMAL



LOSS OF APPETITE



SLEEPLESSNESS

The Dentist is Fun, Start By Age 1

Great news! If your child is enrolled in Medicaid, your child has dental benefits.

To find a Medicaid Dental provider in your area, visit the NC Division of Health Benefits (DHB) website:

<https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/find-doctor/medicaid-dental-providers>

Need assistance with enrollment? No problem! Check out DHB's enrollment website: ncmedicaidplans.gov/enroll

Find the right dental home for your child with special needs using this helpful guide:

www.dph.ncdhhs.gov/wch/doc/families/DentalHomeChecklist-102119-WEB.pdf