

FAQ'S



Kids^{ON}_{1st} DENTISTRY

What is the difference between a pediatric dentist and a family or general dentist?

Pediatric dentists are the pediatricians of dentistry! A pediatric dentist has two to three years of specialty training after dental school and limits his/her practice to treating children only. At Kids On 1st Dentistry, we provide specialty oral care for infants and children through adolescence, including those with special health care needs.

What can I expect during my first visit with a pediatric dentist?

Not only you can find out if the brushing you are doing at home needs some tweaking, we at Kids On 1st Dentistry, can identify early problems and monitor or correct them. Your child can learn that going to the dentist helps prevent problems and it can be fun!

Practice "going to the dentist" before you're your first visit. There are videos and books that can help your child feel at ease during the first visit. Most kids do great on their first visit to the dentist. However, do not feel discouraged if there are some tears; consistency is key, continue with the dental visits every 6 months and in no time your child will be a pro! Don't wait to schedule until there is a dental problem, because it can make your child's experience more difficult

During your child's first visit we will provide you age-specific information to help caring for your child's oral health. Oral and dental development milestones will be discussed as well as oral habits that can cause long term problems on your child's oral and facial development.

Oral hygiene will be reviewed, while providing a dental cleaning and dietary counselling. Fluoride intake, pros and cons will be revised, and we will give you specific recommendations.

We will also guide you on important steps in case of dental trauma and review preventative measures to help you maintain and improve your child's dental and oral health.

We may need to take X-rays. X-rays show us decay and other problems between the teeth. They will also show if teeth are coming in the way they should.

When your child goes for a dental exam, we can tell you if crooked or crowded teeth may cause problems. In many cases, crooked teeth can straighten out as the child's jaw grows and the rest of the teeth come in.

If they do not straighten out, your child may have a bite problem (also known as malocclusion). This can cause problems with eating and with teeth cleaning. It can also affect your child's looks and make him or her feel out of place. We can suggest ways to treat this or refer your child to an orthodontist.

When should I schedule my baby's first visit with Kids On 1st Dentistry?

The first assessment of your baby's oral health, by a pediatric dentist like us, should be when the first tooth appears, or no later than his/her first birthday. The goal is to have your child visit us before there is a problem with his or her teeth, and give you valuable information that will help you prevent oral disease. In most cases, a dental exam every six months will let your child's dentist catch small problems early.

What should I use to clean my baby's teeth?

A toothbrush will remove plaque bacteria that can lead to decay. Any soft-bristled toothbrush with a small head, preferably one designed specifically for infants, should be used at least twice a day; after breakfast and at bedtime after dinner.

Types of Toothbrushes:



Finger brushes, training brushes and wipes can be used before the back teeth (molars) erupt; they are useful for cleaning the front teeth and gums. Once molars come in, a soft bristled brush should be used to reach the deep grooves of the back teeth. When your child comes for a dental cleaning we will give you an appropriate size new brush to replace the old one!



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Are baby teeth really that important?

Primary, or "baby," teeth are important for many reasons. Not only do they help children speak clearly and chew naturally, but they also aid in forming a path that permanent teeth can follow when they are ready to erupt helping them to come in the right place. In many cases in a baby tooth is lost too early, it can cause misalignment or impaction of the permanent tooth coming under it. Remember your child will have baby teeth for a long time, with the last one coming out at 11 or 12 years of age. Problems on baby teeth can cause problems on the permanent teeth (stain, deformity, impaction) as well as pain and infection.

What should I do if my child has a toothache?

Give us a call! In the meantime, have your child rinse with warm salt water. Give the child acetaminophen (e.g., Children's Tylenol) and alternate with Ibuprofen if the pain continues after 4-6 hrs. Do not give or place aspirin on the teeth or gums.

If the face is swollen come see us as soon as possible, but if your child has any difficulty swallowing or breathing go immediately to the emergency room.

Are thumb sucking and pacifier habits harmful for a child's mouth and teeth?

Thumb and pacifier sucking habits will generally only become a problem if they go on for a very long period. Most children stop these habits on their own, but if they are still using the pacifier or sucking their thumb or fingers past the age of three, all efforts should be focused on discouraging the habit and helping the child stop.

How can I prevent decay caused by nursing?

Nursing alone is unlikely to cause dental decay, but after other foods are introduced to your child's diet, nursing on demand can cause dental problems.

Avoid nursing children to sleep, nursing in the middle of the night or putting anything other than water in their bed-time bottle. If you occasionally had to nurse your child to sleep or in the middle of the night, have handy a bottle or sippy cup with water and allow your child to take a few sips of water after.

Also, learn the proper way to brush and floss your child's teeth. Take your child to a pediatric dentist regularly to have his/her teeth and gums checked. The first dental visit should be scheduled by your child's first birthday.

How often does my child need to see the pediatric dentist?

A check-up every six months is recommended in order to prevent cavities and other dental problems. These visits are also helpful to reinforce positive oral care habits, and review brushing and flossing techniques.

However, your pediatric dentist can sometimes recommend more often visits based on your child's personal oral health need.

Toothpaste: when should we begin using it and how much?

The sooner the better! As soon as the first tooth comes in parents can use an age-appropriate sized toothbrush with a tiny smear of fluoride toothpaste twice daily. Once children are 3 to 6 years old, then the amount should be increased to a pea-size dollop and perform or assist your child's toothbrushing.

Remember that young children do not have the ability or motor skills to brush their teeth effectively until about the age of nine and even after that, daily reminders and your magic finish touch may be necessary.

Children should spit out and not swallow excess toothpaste after brushing. If you feel uncomfortable about using fluoridated toothpaste on your child, come talk to us and we can review your child's needs and caries risk to guide you in the right direction.

Check the fluoride content of your child's toothpaste; most toothpastes manufactured in the United States are fluoridated, but many are not. **smear vs. pea size**



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33915 1ST WAY SOUTH, SUITE 100 FEDERAL WAY, WA 98003 | (253) 517-7780 | DENTISTRY@KIDSON1ST.COM



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What about mouthwash?

Wait until your child is about 6 years or older and be present to make sure the mouthwash is being used correctly. Choose a mouthwash with fluoride and alcohol free.

How do I make my child's diet safe for his teeth?

Make sure your child has a balanced diet, including one serving each of fruits and vegetables, breads and cereals, milk and dairy products, and meat, fish and eggs. Remember no more than 3 snacks per day and limiting the servings of sugars and starches will also aid in protecting your child's teeth from decay.

You can also ask your pediatric dentist to help you select foods that protect your children's teeth, and we have helpful printed material that can assist you to choose healthier snack options. As general rule sticky foods (sweets and crackers) stick around and linger on teeth, increasing the opportunity for bacteria to produce acid and caries!

What are sealants and how do they work?

Sealants are a protective coat, same color of the tooth, that is applied on top of the chewing surface of the molars (back teeth) filling-in the crevasses on those surfaces. This shuts out food particles that could get caught in the teeth, causing cavities and they make it easier for your child to clean the area. The application is fast and comfortable and can effectively protect teeth for many years.

They are mostly recommended on permanent molars because they tend to be "groovier", but sometimes baby teeth can also be sealed to make them less likely to trap food and germs.

How do I know if my child is getting enough fluoride?

Call your local water supplier and get information about how much fluoride is in your water. Using that number your pediatric dentist can evaluate if the fluoride level of your child's primary source of drinking water is adequate or if your child is not getting enough. Your pediatric dentist may prescribe fluoride supplements.

What can I do to protect my child's teeth during sporting events?

Soft plastic mouth-guards can be used to protect a child's teeth, lips, cheeks, and gums from sport related injuries. A custom-fitted mouthguard developed by a pediatric dentist will protect your child from injuries to the teeth, face and even provide protection from severe injuries to the head.

What should I do if my child knocks out a baby tooth?

Remain calm, comfort your child, and stop the bleeding by applying pressure in the area with a cold and clean washcloth. Ice the area and give your child some acetaminophen as needed. Popsicles are highly encouraged to help your child feel better, stop the bleeding, and decrease possible inflammation.

Search for the tooth and save it; do not try to reposition it as it can damage the permanent tooth developing underneath. Your pediatric dentist may want to see the tooth to make sure it came out in one piece. Call your pediatric dentist to assess the damage and receive further instructions.

What should I do if my child knocks out a permanent tooth?

The most important thing to do is to remain calm and reassure your child. Then find the tooth. Hold it by the crown rather than the root and if it is clean try to reinsert it in the socket. If that is not possible, put the tooth in a glass of cold milk and take your child and the tooth immediately to the pediatric dentist. The sooner the tooth is repositioned in the mouth the higher the chances the tooth can be saved.



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♥ *Why X-rays, how often are they needed and how safe are they?*

“To see is to know, not to see is to guess” and we won’t guess about your child’s health. Dental radiographs allow your pediatric dentist to see in between the teeth, evaluate for caries depth, bone problems, malformations and even missing or extra teeth. The frequency of dental x-rays depends on your child’s needs. Radiographs should be taken on every dental visit for every child.

Some kids need radiographs every 3 or 6 months, other every 12 -18 months.

There is very little risk in dental X-rays. Pediatric dentists are especially careful to limit the amount of radiation to which children are exposed. Protective aprons and digital radiographs are used to ensure safety and minimize the amount of radiation.

♥ *What is the best toothbrush for kids?*

After the baby molars come in, begin using a small soft bristle manual toothbrush. A small but thick handle can help young children get a better grip of the brush. By the time your child is 4 years old and is no longer chewing on the toothbrush, you can introduce an electric toothbrush.

Electric toothbrushes sometimes make it more fun for the child and when properly used can reach more areas than a manual brush. When your child reaches 9-10 years old, many adult teeth are now present, and a larger head toothbrush – manual or electric- can be used.

Any soft-bristled toothbrush should be used two times a day for two minutes. Remember that regardless of using a manual or an electric toothbrush, the best toothbrush is the one your child gets to really use!

♥ *Do you provide sleep dentistry?*

We provide nitrous oxide (laughing gas) and in cases where the child needs more complex treatment or is unable to tolerate dental treatment. We also provide in-office general anaesthesia to ensure completion of all your child’s dental treatment in a safe and pleasant manner.

♥ *How can parents help prevent tooth decay?*

Parents should take their children to the dentist regularly, beginning with the eruption of the first tooth. Then, the dentist can recommend a specific program of brushing, flossing, and other treatments for parents to supervise and teach to their children. These home treatments, when added to regular dental visits and a balanced diet, will help give your child a lifetime of healthy habits.

♥ *Are parents allowed in the room during the dental visits?*

We encourage one parent to come into the clinical area with the child for at least the first dental visit. As your child gets older and more familiar with us, we let you decide if you want to accompany your child.

Due to space limitation and privacy, we ask that you limit one adult per child scheduled and only children with an appointment attend the visit. It is very difficult for you and the dentist to focus the attention on your child if there are others around that may need attention and care.