

Blue Cross Blue Shield Healthy Kids Dental Newsletter

Spring | 2020



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Baby teeth are important

- Toddlers have 20 teeth total.
- Baby teeth help youngsters eat a well-balanced diet through proper chewing.
- The first set of teeth help infants and toddlers make certain sounds and learn speech.
- Primary teeth save space for the adult teeth and guide the adult teeth into their proper position.
- Healthy baby teeth give kids a beautiful smile.

Keep your breath fresh as spring and teeth bright as summer

- **Brush and floss**
Brush twice a day and floss between teeth daily. This helps get rid of bacteria that can cause bad breath.
- **Mouthwash**
Mouthwashes can help kill bacteria and get rid of bad breath.
- **Drink water and limit sugary drinks**
Drink plenty of water. Avoid sugary drinks and drinks with caffeine, such as cola and coffee.
- **Treat dry mouth**
To get saliva moving in your mouth, eat foods that require a lot of chewing, such as carrots or apples. You can also try sugar-free gum or sugar-free candy. Talk to your dentist for help.
- **Quit smoking**
Give up this bad habit to make both your breath and your life better.
- **Visit your dentist regularly**
Your dentist will check for problems that can cause bad breath.

Resource: ADA American Dental Association



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Keeping your family's teeth healthy

Cavities are a common disease in the United States. A cavity is a hole in a tooth. If it is not treated it can get bigger, cause pain and get infected. Those with untreated cavities can have problems with eating, speaking, playing and learning. Children who have poor oral health often miss more school and receive lower grades than children who don't.*



Dental decay process

Bacteria and Germs + Food and drinks = Acid produced

Healthy tooth + Acid = Cavity

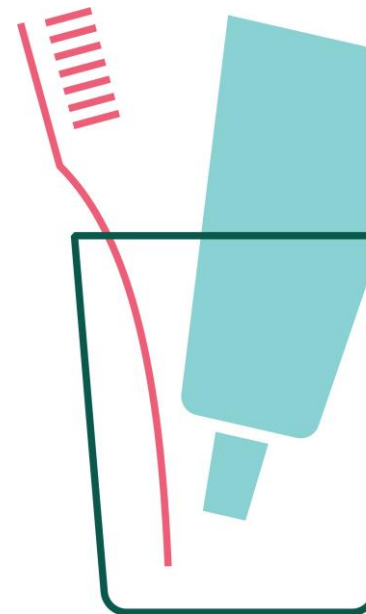
Cavities are 100 percent preventable. There are things you can do to protect your child's teeth from cavities.

For babies

- Wipe gums twice a day with a soft, clean cloth. Do this in the morning after the first feeding and right before bed. Wiping the gums removes bacteria and sugars that can cause cavities.
- When teeth come in, start brushing twice a day with a soft, small bristled toothbrush and plain water.
- Visit the dentist by your baby's first birthday to spot signs of problems early.
- Talk to your dentist or doctor about putting fluoride varnish on your child's teeth as soon as the first tooth appears.

For children

- Brush their teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- If your child is younger than 6 years, make sure your child only uses a pea-sized amount of toothpaste and always spits it out. Help your child brush correctly.
- Have your child drink tap water that contains fluoride.
- Ask your child's dentist about sealants that will help keep teeth clean.



Contact us

Phone

1-800-936-0935, TTY:711

Website

bcbsm.com/healthykids

Text messages

Sign up to receive text messages about your Healthy Kids Dental benefits:

Text "SMILE" to 1-833-271-0459

*Content source: CDC Oral Health Basics-Children's Oral Health



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