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Boston Dental Group's
Complete Guide
to Understanding
Your Child's Teeth



Start Your Child on the Path To Beautiful Teeth!

The foundations of good oral health are built during childhood. Even before a child's first tooth comes in, the health of their future teeth may be affected. Parents play the biggest role in helping their child develop a healthy smile.

There is often confusion about oral hygiene for kids, such as:

- When should a child first see a dentist?
- When should a child start brushing their own teeth?
- When should fluoride toothpaste be used?

We have created this guide to clear some of the confusion surrounding these questions.

From infants to school-age children, this guide should provide helpful oral health information. We will clear up misconceptions and provide a few simple tips to help make dentistry and oral health for kids easier and more fun. By the end of this guide, you'll be an expert on your child's teeth!



Age-Based Navigation

Ages 0 to 3: Tooth Decay Prevention

[5. Clean Teeth Starts With the First Tooth](#)

[7. The First Dental Visit](#)

Ages 4 to 6: Building Good Habits

[10. Caring for Baby Teeth](#)

[12. Extra Protection Against Cavities](#)

Ages 7 to 12: Helping Teeth Come In Properly

[15. Early Orthodontic Corrections](#)

Ages 13 to 17: Straightening Permanent Teeth

[18. Complete Orthodontic Corrections](#)

[**21. Dental Routine Checklist for Kids**](#)



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1

Ages 0 to 3

Tooth Decay Prevention



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Clean Teeth Start With the First Tooth

Very few of us remember when we began brushing our own teeth, and most of us don't give it much thought until we have children of our own.

Newborns do have teeth, although you can't see them right away. These teeth are hidden below the gums. Your child's teeth may begin to appear at as early as three months, giving rise to the teething stage. During this time, many parents have questions about their infant's oral health.

Essential Information on Tooth Eruption:

- Before the first tooth comes in, clean the inside of your baby's mouth with a soft, clean cloth.
- Your baby's teeth will begin to appear anywhere from three to six months of age.
- Tooth decay can develop quickly in babies. The most common is baby bottle tooth decay (BBTD), where bacteria feed on the sugars in milk and destroy newly-emerged teeth.



Clean Teeth Start With the First Tooth



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Essential Information on Brushing and Toothpaste:

- When one or more teeth come in, transition to a soft-bristled baby toothbrush.
- Use a small amount (about the size of a grain of rice) of fluoridated or non-fluoridated toothpaste.
- Small amounts of fluoridated (containing fluoride) toothpaste are safe, even if occasionally swallowed. Long-term, repeated swallowing can cause white stains on teeth.
- If a child eats large amounts of fluoridated toothpaste (some children may eat it like candy if left unattended) they may experience short-term stomach discomfort or vomiting. Foods with calcium, such as milk, cheese, or yogurt, can lessen the effects.



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The First Dental Visit

The first teeth to appear will be the front teeth and first molars. These usually appear before your child is a year old. By their first birthday, your child may have four or more teeth.

If your child has not yet had a dental visit by the one year mark, schedule an appointment. It is important to schedule an initial check within your child's first year.

The first dental appointment can be a stressful time for both children and parents.

Here are few tips to make your first visit easier:

- 1. Find a dentist that specializes in pediatrics**

Pediatric dentists have the patience, experience, and enthusiasm to make young visitors feel safe and excited about dental care.



The First Dental Visit

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2. Go to a pediatric dental office

Pediatric dental offices will be decorated with lots of pictures, bright colors, and familiar characters your child will enjoy.

3. Stay calm during your visit

At only a year old, your child won't know why they are there, or who the dentist is, but they will pick up on your attitude. If you seem calm and happy to be at the dentist, they will be as well.

4. Understand the purpose

This first visit will keep your child's teeth healthy, prevent decay, and establish a good relationship with the dentist. Even though they don't have all their teeth yet, this is an important milestone.



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2

Ages 4 to 6

Building Good Habits



Caring for Baby Teeth

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By age three, your child will likely have all of their primary (baby) teeth. However, there are some misconceptions about the importance of primary teeth. Even though primary teeth will eventually fall out on their own, this will take years. Primary teeth are placeholders for adult teeth. If primary teeth are decayed or don't come in properly, they can generate problems for permanent teeth.

Simple Tips to Care for Primary Teeth:

- Simple sugars can feed oral bacteria. This bacteria will then produce acid, and lead to cavities, which will destroy teeth.
- If dental cavities form on primary teeth, they must be filled. If left unaddressed, the cavities can cause serious infection, pain, and long-term damage to future teeth.
- Children should brush their teeth for two minutes, twice a day, using gentle circular motions. They should floss once every day.



Caring for Baby Teeth

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Simple Tips for Primary Teeth (cont'd):

- Try brushing your teeth alongside your children.
- This will set a good example, make it more fun for them, and ensure that they are brushing properly.
- Two minutes of brushing can seem long. Try playing a game, dancing, watching a short video, or using the checklist at the end of this guide.



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Extra Protection Against Cavities

Dental cavities are small holes in teeth caused by decay. These holes expose the tooth's inner tissues and will lead to infections that are harmful and painful. Brushing and flossing should remove bacteria and acids, but cavities are still possible. Dentists provide several treatments to protect against cavities. Some of these occur as a part of regular cleanings and others you may need to schedule.

Fluoride Treatments

Fluoride kills bacteria and remineralizes teeth, allowing it to protect and restore teeth at the same time. Your child's dentist will apply a fluoride treatment with each visit.

Cleaning

Brushing and flossing can't remove stains or build-up bacteria deposits called tartar, but your dentist can. At each appointment, stains and tartar will be removed.



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Extra Protection
Against Cavities

Dental Sealants

Sealants can make a major difference in how well your child's teeth are protected. A thin layer of resin is applied to each tooth. The layer of resin prevents any damage that bacteria and acids might cause. When dental sealants are applied to teeth, children get 80% less cavities. Sealants may be applied by any dentist of Boston Dental Group, and may be covered by your insurance.



Find out if dental sealants are the right choice for your child's teeth.

[Schedule an Appointment »](#)





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3

Ages 7 to 12

Ensuring Proper Tooth
Placement



Early Orthodontic Corrections

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At age six or seven, primary teeth begin to fall out and the first permanent teeth start to come in. Your child's sucking habits, speech habits, and tongue behavior will determine how their teeth come in and how their jaw forms.

At this stage, your child's teeth are likely crooked or crowded together. This is an ideal time for your child's first orthodontic visit.

With early corrective orthodontics, it is much easier to correct teeth misalignment or overbites. Myofunctional devices, or myobracess, are one method to prevent any possible problems.

Explanation of Myofunctional Devices:

- Myofunctional devices are molds of your child's mouth which correct underlying musculoskeletal issues causing teeth misalignment and jaw deformation.



Early Orthodontic Corrections

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- Myofunctional devices are worn at night and for a few hours throughout the day.
- These devices are painless and removable at any time.
- When worn properly, myobraces can prevent the need for braces later on, or reduce the duration and discomfort of braces.

[Find more information on Myofunctional Devices here »](#)



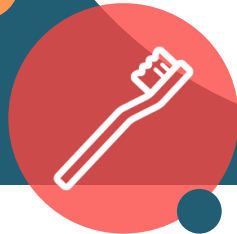


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Ages 13 to 17

Straightening Permanent
Teeth



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Complete Orthodontic Correction

By the time your child is twelve years old, they should have all of their permanent teeth. Myobrases, when used early on, can help these teeth to come in straight and reduce the appearance of an overbite or underbite. Full braces will be used afterwards to complete the realignment. Today, there are many different types of braces and orthodontic care is easier on your child than ever.

Essential Orthodontic Information for Your Child:

- Traditional braces consist of metal wires, brackets, and rubber bands that attach to teeth and guide alignment through periodic tightening by a dentist.
- Traditional braces can cause some discomfort after tightening, but over-the-counter painkillers are usually enough to provide relief.
- Ceramic braces use a similar system, except they are made of white ceramic material which is much less noticeable than metal.



Complete Orthodontic Correction

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- Braces require extra attention to dental hygiene and adults may need to insist on this in order to prevent tooth decay.
- Braces are generally worn for about 18 months and tightened every six to eight weeks.
- Invisalign uses a series of clear, medical-grade plastic trays fitted to the patient's mouth to correct misalignments. This is not effective for all orthodontic needs, however.





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5

Dental Routine Checklist for Kids



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Name: _____

Week of: _____

Healthy Smiles Chart

Add a 🦷 to each column you complete each day!

Day of the Week	Morning Brushing	Nightly Brushing	Flossing	# of Daily Smiles
Sunday				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
# of Total Smiles				





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22

Do you still have a question about your child's teeth?

Our pediatric dentists and orthodontists can help children of all ages.

Your child will be educated on preventative care, and Boston Dental Group will be able to handle any future orthodontics or emergency dental work that your child might need, in the event of any weekend accidents. No matter what your child needs, we will always be able to accommodate accordingly, and will not refer you out to external providers.

[Schedule a Dental Appointment for Your Child »](#)

If your child is particularly nervous about the dentist, our [Affordable Dental For Kids](#) location in North Las Vegas is the perfect solution. With colorful, themed rooms, kid-sized waiting room tables, and treasure chests filled with goodies, kids love their time there.

