

Tips to avoid future dental problems with your children

- Brush your child's teeth every day using fluoridated toothpaste. Only a pea-sized portion of fluoride toothpaste is needed. Instruct your child not to swallow toothpaste since swallowing too much fluoride could cause bright white stains (called mottling) on the teeth.
- Young children cannot do a good job of brushing their teeth alone. It is best that an adult sit down in front of their child every day or so and brush the teeth for them after they have done it themselves. Before bedtime is a great time.
- Avoid between meal sweets and snacks that increase the chance of tooth decay. Sweets, such as candy, cookies, colas, and fruit drinks, can cause tooth decay. Many children drink large amounts of fruit juice every day. This increases the chances of tooth decay. Starchy foods, like crackers, and sticky foods, like raisins, tend to stay in the mouth longer and are more likely to lead to decay. Starches and fruits, however, are a needed part of any child's diet. To avoid tooth decay, be sure your children brush after eating these foods and before bedtime.
- See a dentist regularly for dental checkups every six months to a year.