

Did you know? The AAPD recommends that every child have a Dental Home by age one.

A “dental home” is a dental practice where a child receives ongoing, comprehensive, and compassionate oral health care.

What to Expect at the First Dental Visit with Dr. Kaitlynn Harvey

- A gentle exam of your baby's mouth and developing teeth.
- Guidance on teething, thumb-sucking, nutrition, and oral hygiene.
- A chance to ask questions and create a dental care plan that grows with your child.



Guiding smiles to bright, healthy futures

Establishing a dental home by 12 months of age helps children and their families build a foundation for a lifetime of optimal oral health and healthy habits.

Benefits of a dental home include:

- Improved Oral Health Outcomes: Regular access to preventive care and early intervention helps reduce the risk of cavities and dental problems.
- Comprehensive Care: Having a consistent provider who knows your child's unique needs and dental history ensures personalized, effective treatment.
- Positive Dental Experiences: A familiar, child-friendly environment promotes comfort, trust, and a positive attitude toward dental visits.



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INFANT ORAL HEALTH CARE

RECOMMENDATIONS &
GUIDANCE

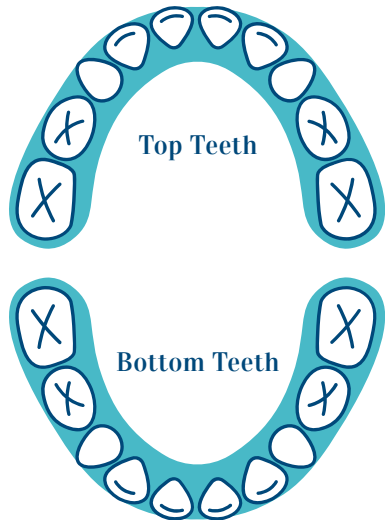
Let's talk about your baby's oral health!

Why Infant Oral Health Matters:

Did you know that your baby's oral health plays a key role in their overall well-being? Healthy baby teeth help your child chew properly, speak clearly, and build a strong foundation for a lifetime of confident, healthy smiles.

According to the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), good oral care begins even before the first tooth appears! Wiping your baby's gums with a soft cloth and establishing healthy habits early can make all the difference.

Children have a total of 20 baby teeth!



The first tooth appears around 6 months of age

All baby teeth are typically erupted by age 2

Schedule your baby's first dental visit by age 1 or within 6 months of the first tooth!

Feeding Recommendations

- **Clean Gums Early**
 - Wipe your baby's gums with a clean, damp washcloth or silicone finger brush after each breastfeeding or bottle-feeding.
- **Smart Bottle Use**
 - Only offer breast milk, formula, or water in bottles
 - Avoid sugary drinks like juice or soda
 - Putting your baby to sleep with a bottle or sippy cup can lead to early childhood cavities.
- **Encourage Open Cup Use**
 - Begin transitioning to an open cup around the first birthday.
 - Supports oral and speech development, helps with teething, strengthens swallowing, and may reduce decay risk.
- **Limit Juice**
 - No juice before 12-24 months; then limit to 4 oz per day.
- **Avoid Sticky Snacks**
 - Avoid gummy candies, sticky treats, and even gummy vitamins—these cling to teeth and increase cavity risk.
- **Smarter Snacking**
 - Pair starchy snacks like crackers or goldfish with cheese, veggies, or yogurt to help protect teeth
 - Eat nature's version of sugar— real fruit!
 - Choose crunchy veggies over chips!
- **Watch Snacking Frequency**
 - Snacking or sipping all day creates a constant acidic environment, which can lead to cavities. Offer water between meals and limit snack times.

Healthy Habits for Growing Smiles

Brushing

- Baby teeth typically begin to come in around 6 months of age.
- Brush twice a day with a soft-bristled toothbrush and a smear of fluoride toothpaste.
- After brushing at night, only water should touch your baby's teeth—no snacks or milk before bed to help prevent cavities.
- By age 3, switch to a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste as your child learns to spit.



Pacifiers

- Don't put a pacifier in your mouth—cavity-causing bacteria can spread.
- Never dip pacifiers in anything sweet
- Aim to wean from pacifiers and thumb-sucking by age 3 to support healthy oral development.

Flossing

- Flossing should be introduced once two baby teeth are touching.

Teething Tips

- Do not use benzocaine-containing teething products (i.e. Orajel, Hurricaine, etc.) These products can cause serious reactions in children. Details are available on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website: [fda.gov](https://www.fda.gov)
- Use safe teething toys made of nontoxic materials or a chilled washcloth to help with soothing