



Kaitlynn Harvey, DDS, center, enjoys providing dental health education for children.

Restoring healthy

Smiles

Oral rehab restores kids' dental health in a single visit

Children need high-quality dental care not only for their teeth, but also for their overall well-being. Dental cavities or tooth decay is the most common chronic disease in children, noted Kaitlynn Harvey, DDS, of Columbus Pediatric Dentistry. Over time, untreated dental disease can lead to pain; difficulty eating, sleeping or concentrating in school; infections; tooth loss; or even systemic health problems.

For children who need extensive dental work that requires multiple visits, Harvey now offers oral rehabilitation — a surgical solution at Columbus Community Hospital. This comprehensive procedure allows her to perform all the dental care a child needs in a single visit.

“By addressing all their dental issues in one visit, we can relieve pain, stop infections and restore function — helping them return to a healthy routine,” Harvey said. “This also gives us a clean slate to help the family build healthier habits moving forward, reducing the chance of future problems.”

Who might be a candidate?

Typical candidates for oral rehabilitation are children ages 6 years and younger with extensive dental needs. They may have significant tooth decay, dental infections or multiple cavities that would require several appointments — which can be tough for kids to tolerate in a traditional office setting.



Make an appointment

For questions or to schedule a visit, contact Columbus Pediatric Dentistry online at cbuspediatricdentistry.com/patients or call 402-585-0001.



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That's where dental surgery comes in. Kids can have a better experience when they undergo dental treatment under general anesthesia. And since they need just one visit, parents don't have to take as much time off from work.

The procedure can also help kids with special health care needs, severe dental anxiety or behavioral challenges.

What to expect

A child's primary care doctor will need to complete a presurgical evaluation 30 days before the surgery date to ensure they are healthy enough to undergo general anesthesia. Depending on their health history, some children may need an additional evaluation from other specialists.

During the surgery, the child receives anesthesia from an anesthesia team, and Harvey completes the dental work in a sterile, controlled environment.

"Safety is our top priority," she noted. "We follow hospital protocols, and the anesthesia team monitors the child's vital signs closely throughout the procedure."

Harvey typically performs X-rays to confirm her treatment plan, then completes a dental cleaning and other work as needed, such as fillings, crowns or

extractions. When she needs to remove baby teeth, she typically uses spacers to maintain that space until the permanent teeth erupt.

"I'm usually doing four separate dental appointments in one session," Harvey said. "It's full-mouth rehabilitation."

The procedure lasts about 90 minutes depending on the needs of the child. Kids can return home once the anesthesia wears off, and recovery is generally quick.

"They usually only need one to two days off of school," Harvey said.

Expert pediatric dentist dedicated to children's care

Harvey is highly qualified to perform dental surgery at CCH. She earned her Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. She then completed a two-year residency in pediatric dentistry at the University of Iowa College of Dentistry and the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, both in Iowa City.

"I'm excited to offer this specialized care in Columbus, because I know a lot of families were having to travel outside of our area for this," she said.