

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR CHILD'S PRIMARY TEETH



A GUIDE FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN



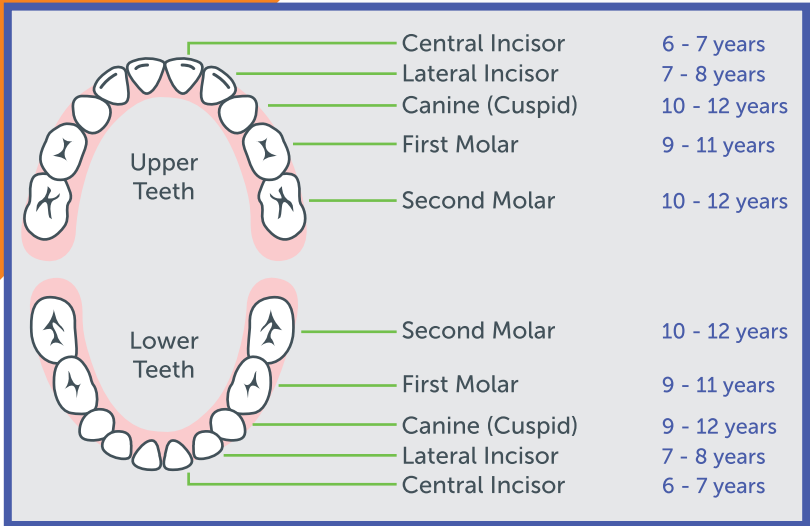
Dentistry
for Children and Adolescents
PEDIATRIC SPECIALISTS



It might be hard to believe, but children are born with all 20 of their “baby” teeth fully formed. They stay hidden in the infant’s jawbones until they gradually begin to erupt.

The more you know about the development of your child’s teeth, the better you will be able to care for them as they grow up!

Let’s get started!



With infants, it is not hard to identify when the teething process begins. When they get fussy, it is typically a sign they are hungry, sleepy or need a little cuddling.

If none of these things seem to soothe your baby, you might take a peek into their mouth to see if you can spot any teeth beginning to erupt.

An infant can get his or her first teeth beginning as early as 6 months after birth. The front four teeth (central incisors) will erupt first, two on top and two on the bottom. They will typically have all four of those teeth by their first birthday.

The front four will be followed by the lateral incisor, the canine, and then the first and second molars. These teeth will emerge throughout your child's second and third year.

By age 3, most children will have received their full set of baby teeth.



The Importance of a Healthy Oral Hygiene Routine

A common misconception is that primary teeth aren't as important to maintain as permanent teeth. This could not be further from the truth.

Good dental hygiene is important not only for your child's oral health, but it also get them in the habit of a healthy routine.

You may start brushing your child's teeth as soon as that first tooth appears. Just use a little water on a soft bristled brush and gently clean the teeth after meals.

Around the age of two, you might want to consider introducing your child to proper brushing techniques.





Your child's primary teeth are still susceptible to the same problems that plague adults. Tooth decay, plaque, and gingivitis are just as likely to affect your child as they are to affect you.

Cavities and infection can cause unwanted pain for your child, and they can actually have an impact on the permanent teeth as they develop beneath the surface.

The best way to promote healthy oral hygiene is by developing a good routine and to maintaining your child's regular dentist visits.

A healthy routine involves brushing at least twice a day and flossing once. Limiting your child's intake of sugary liquids will help curb the development of cavities and tooth decay.



When Will My Child Lose His Baby Teeth?



Your child's permanent teeth will begin pushing out their primary predecessors at around age 6 or 7. The process begins as it did with their baby teeth, with the front four (central incisors) becoming loose as the permanents begin eruption.

As the new permanent tooth begins to emerge, the root of the baby tooth will begin to dissolve. The more the root dissolves, the looser the tooth becomes until it eventually pops out.

Forcibly pulling or tugging might irritate the area, running the risk of damaging area and causing your child unwanted pain. If possible, it is best to let your child wiggle the tooth free on his or her own.



What If My Child Loses A Tooth Prematurely?

If your child loses a tooth prematurely either by accident or extraction, you should consult your dentist about space maintainers.

A space maintainer is exactly what it sounds like: it is a placeholder for a permanent tooth that is not quite ready to erupt.

Premature tooth loss can cause the other teeth to shift into the empty space previously reserved for your child's new permanent tooth. This can cause bigger problems down the road for your child and can also end up being quite costly.

Space maintainers help to ensure that all of your child's baby teeth remain in their intended locations and their soon to be adult teeth emerge in the proper place.

What to Do Next:

Your child might be a little scared at the thought of their teeth falling out, so reassure them that it is not typically a painful experience.

It might also be a good time to introduce the wonders of the tooth fairy, which is sure to help put their minds at ease and get them excited about losing that first tooth!

Your child will slowly lose all of their primary teeth by around age 12, but their adult teeth will continue to grow until their late teens.

Be sure to keep up with your regular dental appointments to make sure all of his or her teeth are growing healthy and in alignment. If your child does need orthodontic work, the sooner you assess the issue, the better.



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Have more questions?



If you would like to schedule an appointment for your child, or have any other questions regarding your child's dental health, don't hesitate to give us a call!

Ensure your child is receiving the best dental care by selecting the right provider for your family's needs. At Dentistry for Children and Adolescents, we deliver oral health care that is comprehensive, accessible and family-centered for children and adolescents.

To learn more about us and the services we can provide your family, call either one of our locations:

Creve Coeur, MO at 314-567-1122

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