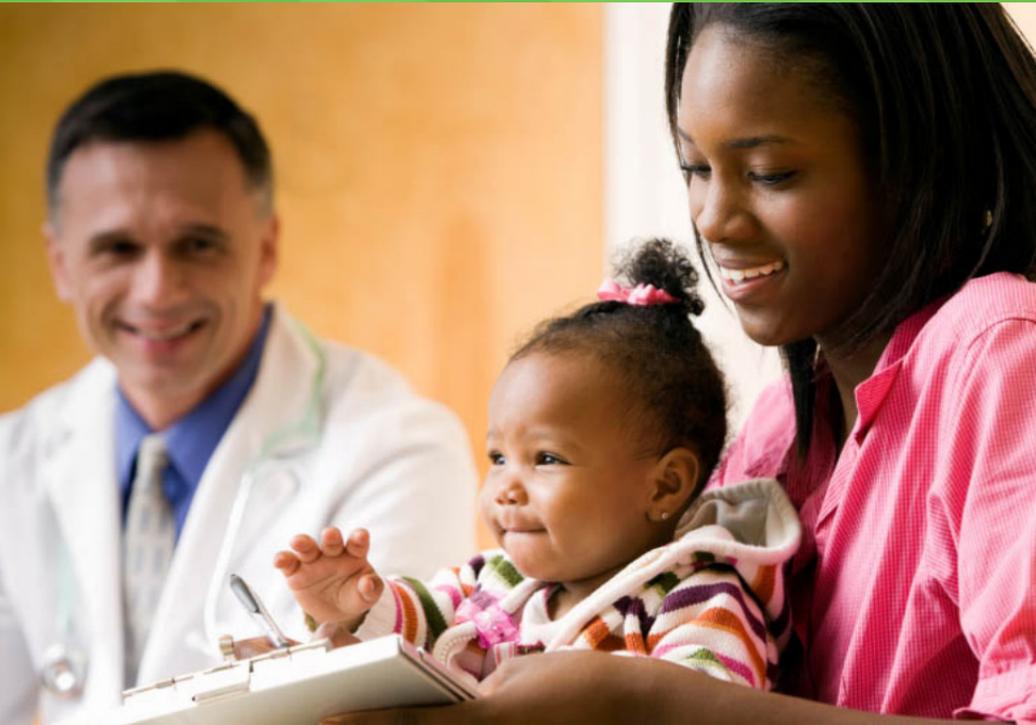


# FIRST DENTAL VISIT & BEYOND

WHAT TO EXPECT



YOUR CHECKLIST FOR PREPARATION



**Dentistry**  
for Children and Adolescents  
PEDIATRIC SPECIALISTS



## When should I take my newborn to the dentist?

- Children should have their first dental appointment by the time they reach 12 months old. The first tooth often erupts at 6 months.
- Your child's dentist will provide information about developing early dental habits that will promote good oral health, including:
  - How to prevent baby bottle tooth decay
  - What to do when your baby is teething
  - How to deal with thumb-sucking
  - How to clean your baby's mouth
  - How to wean your child off the pacifier
- As your child gets older, his/her dentist will establish a long-term cleaning plan that will ensure healthy oral development.





## How to prepare yourself and your child

- The first dental visit typically lasts about 45 minutes and will give you and your child the opportunity to become familiar with the dentist.
- It's important not to project your dental anxieties onto your child, as they will quickly become unsettled. Discuss your fears and concerns with the dentist prior to the first visit.
- Try to settle your child's appointment early in the morning. Your child will be more awake and alert during morning hours.
- Explain to your child what to expect prior to the dental visit. Discuss why it is important, what will take place, and how exciting it can be.



## How to prepare your dentist

- The first dental visit will require a complete medical history for your child.
- Discuss with the dentist how your child reacts in certain situations. If he/she is prone to anxiety, your dentist can approach the dental visit more delicately to quickly put your child at ease.
- Newborns and toddlers often experience separation anxiety from their parents during an exam. If you anticipate this reaction, inform your dentist.
- At age 2, it is common for the child to react more defiantly during an exam. Let the dentist know whether “no” is a popular word in your child’s vocabulary.





## AFTER YOUR FIRST VISIT

- It is important to enforce healthy cleaning habits outside of the dentist office so that future dental appointments continue to be pleasant experiences for your child.
- Clean your child's gums with a warm damp cloth before teeth erupt; when they do erupt, use a soft toothbrush and small amount of toothpaste to teach your child proper brushing.
- Implement the suggestions provided by your dentist for limiting the amount of time your child spends with a bottle and avoid sending them to bed with sweetened drinks.
- Schedule future dental appointments at least every 6 months to routinely check on the development of your child's dental environment and clean newly erupted teeth.





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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**

**St. Charles, MO at 636-946-5225**