

# Recommendations to Protect Children's Teeth



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## Abstract

Ignoring the oral health of children would cause the problems such as teeth decays, gum problems, anomalies of the teeth and increasing the dental expenses. Compliance with the recommendations of the dentist can prevent these problems. These important factors are summarized as golden age for dental examination in children, baby bottle caries syndrome, usage of the proper toothbrushes, medicines, eating snacks before bed time, having control over eating junk foods and lastly sucking pacifier during sleeping. Two main groups are involved in the prevention which is the dentists and the parents. In this article, a series of dental recommendations are presented which can be helpful.

**Key words:** Tooth decays; Teeth anomalies; Dental recommendations; Parents and dentists roles; Snack habits: Brushing; Pacifier

## Introduction

Parents sometimes ignore their children's oral health. Maintaining the health of children, regardless of oral hygiene, could not be fulfilled. In this article a series of key points are suggested that colleagues should recommend to parents. Adopting these recommendations may prevent some oral problems in children. On the first day of examination if colleagues represent the gathered suggestions as pamphlets to the parents, they would have easier tasks at home.

### Age of One or Golden Age

A group of pediatric dentists believe children's oral hygiene should start at the age of one. Dental care and oral hygiene at an early age not only helps to maintain healthy gums but also is effective in reducing dental expenses. Furthermore, the children get familiar with the dental environment of dental office.

### The Hazards of Baby Bottle

It is strongly recommended when a child is lying down; do not put bottle of milk or juice in his mouth. Unfortunately, many parents do not realize that by doing so, his child's oral health is seriously at risk. Sweet liquids inside the bottle will stick the child's teeth and mouth; and creates a perfect environment for the proliferation of the living bacteria. These bacteria produce acids which can damage the teeth. This type of nursing caries in young children is known as baby bottle caries syndrome.

According to an article in the Journal of the Canadian Dental Association, "Primary prevention of ECC has largely been restricted to counseling parents about caries-promoting feeding

behaviors. This approach has also had minimal success. Newer strategies addressing the infectious component through use of topical antimicrobial therapy appear promising [1]."

### Proper Toothbrushes and Toothpastes for Children

Many parents believe young children and infants do not need to brush and keep good oral hygiene. In fact, this is a mistaken belief. If there is even a tooth, it is time to start taking care of that tooth. It should keep in mind even before tooth eruption; parents can gently massage the child's gum. A finger toothbrush can be a good idea to clean the infant's teeth.

Children should have their age-appropriate tooth pastes and soft tooth brushes to use. Brushing teeth should be done at least twice a day. When teeth are fully erupted, application of dental floss is recommended.

At the time of brushing, children may constantly complain and give excuses most of the time. Parents may give up but it is wise not to accept their excuses at all. There should always be some ways to solve this problem. I would recommend children be accompanied when they are brushing; and help them out as much as possible.

Young children should not be forced to brush their teeth because they may be hated from keeping good oral hygiene forever. When the child is not tired, he will be more cooperative.

Another suggestion is that let the children to participate in selection and purchase of toothbrushes. In another words, they should be allowed to choose their personal oral hygiene belongings among the approved oral health products. By doing this, the

child feels self confidence. When the child sees his selection is respected, he feels the pride and dignity. By buying several types of toothbrushes and toothpastes with different flavors, they can be encouraged to brush. Designs and cartoon characters of fantasy toothbrushes would persuade them to brush more often.

Another recommendation is that brushing can be considered as playing a game. When parents want to brush their teeth, it is better to allow their children to brush their parent's teeth. As a result, they learn feeling of responsibility of brushing their teeth from childhood.

### Harmful Drugs

Many of the drugs that are prescribed for children contain sugar and other sweeteners. If these medications, especially chewable type, stick to their teeth, they will cause tooth decay. Children with chronic disease such as heart disease and asthma are more susceptible to tooth decays [2].

Antibiotics and some medications to treat asthma, will promote the growth of some of her bacteria and fungi which lead to formation of fungal infections and thrush in the children's oral cavities [3,4]. If the child has been treated for chronic disease, it should be noted that attention to his oral care is essential.

### Bed Time Snack

Some children feel hungry after brushing at night; and ask their parents to have snack at that time. This could include a sandwich, cereals, Ice cream or even chocolate milk. Unfortunately, the majority of them go to bed immediately after finishing their snacks while they have not brushed their teeth. This is wise to avoid this bad habit. It is better after eating the snack; the parents encourage their children to brush properly.

### Control over the snack habit

When children are hungry during the day, they sometimes start nagging and temper tantrums. This faces the parents with eating problems during the main course. To silence them and get rid of this situation, the parents accept their children's demands. Children are more likely to eat sweets and junk foods as well. It is the responsibilities of parents to monitor this matter.

It should be noted the pattern of feeding children constantly with poor nutrition, can cause dental caries and tooth problems [5]. It also can threaten the child health. Hence, healthy and useful meals could help in solving this serious problem.

If there is a tendency to chewing gum, Sugar -free gum should be used. Those foods that contain sugar and starch should be avoided. The snacks should be healthy foods such as milk, bread

and cheese, boiled eggs, yogurt, fruits, raw vegetables, nuts and dried fruits.

If snacks and food intake are appropriately elected, not only provide the source of nutrition and required energy for children but also play an important role in the prevention of dental caries.

### Pacifier

Pacifier use during sleeping not only causes respiratory problems in children but also increase the incidence of tooth decay as well [6]. The other side effects of pacifier can be cited such as oral yeast infections, trush, impaired tooth eruption and the impact on the growth of the jaws.

### Conclusion

Dental caries is one of the problems even though is preventable with special care but it can be considered as one of the most important diseases in the children and adolescents. Some factors are involved in preventing dental and oral problems in children. Most parents do not pay attention to these facts. Therefore, having knowledge about starting period of dental care, side effects of night time bottle feeding and proper tooth brushing may significantly reduce the causes of dental and oral problems.

Furthermore, parents should be concern of the other factors such as side effect of some medications, bed time eating, Junk food, poor nutrition, and applying pacifier. With proper planning and good oral hygiene can encourage children to have healthy and beautiful tooth. A useful explanation of the dentist and comply with a series of tips of caring for the parents, can be guaranteed by children's oral hygiene.

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