



Brushing Your Toddler's Teeth

Teach your toddler how to brush by doing it for them

Growing Too Fast

The toddler stage can be fun and exciting, where your child's individuality shines in character development as their vocabulary expands. Their curiosity also peaks as they explore inside the cabinets, turn on the faucet, and leave artwork for you on the bathroom mirror using lotion and shaving cream as a medium. At this age, toddlers want to do it all by themselves. While promoting some independence is healthy, it is important to supervise their actions to reduce the risk of injury. For tasks such as teeth brushing, you'll want to perform it for your child until they develop the dexterity to hold the toothbrush at a forty-five-degree angle and brush in a circular motion to remove plaque.

Plaque is a thin film consisting of bacteria, food debris, and saliva collected on the teeth surfaces. If left alone, plaque can cause tooth decay and gum disease.

By age three, your toddler should have all twenty teeth erupted: ten teeth on the top arch and ten teeth on the bottom arch. If they don't have all twenty teeth present, be sure to contact your child's dentist.

Get Comfortable

Toddlers are creative and can get bored quickly, which means the process of teeth brushing can be a challenge and begin as a game of hide-and-seek. Once you have your toddler's attention, position a pillow on your lap and have your child lay on it. This position provides a secure environment for your toddler and allows you to brush without compromising a healthy posture. Another method is to stand behind your toddler to brush and floss. To keep your toddler's attention, you can turn it into a two-minute game or tell a short story and end the session with positive praises.

Brush in a circular motion with the toothbrush angled at forty-five-degrees towards the gum. The toothpaste amount should be the size of a rice grain if your child is in the early stage of tooth eruption and a pea-sized amount if your child's teeth have fully erupted.

Do Not Forget to Floss

Flossing is as essential as brushing; the purpose of flossing is to remove food particles from in-between the teeth that brushing can't accomplish. Flossing prevents cavities, gingivitis, and gum disease. Gently see-saw the floss between two teeth and make a letter "C", moving it up and down the tooth to remove plaque.



Create a Healthy Habit with Your Toddler

Instilling a healthy habit of brushing and flossing in your toddler's daily routine may result in consistency of their teenage personal oral health care and last into adulthood.

There are two methods of flossing:

- Wrap 18-24 inches of floss string around your middle fingers and floss with a see-saw approach
- Use a floss pick designed for children and floss with a see-saw approach



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