

Anticipatory Guidance

Throughout early childhood:

- Use a car safety seat that is properly secured at all times.
- Give the child fluoride supplements only as recommended by the health professional, based on the level of fluoride in the child's drinking water.
- After the one year visit, schedule the next dental appointment for the child according to the schedule recommended by the dental professional, based on the child's individual needs and/or susceptibility to disease.
- Familiarize yourself with the normal appearance of your child's gums and teeth so that you can identify problems if they occur.
- Keep all poisonous substances, medicines, cleaning agents, health and beauty aids, and paints and paint solvents locked in a safe place out of the child's sight and reach.
- Use safety locks on cabinets.
- Always use a safety belt or child safety seat when the child rides in a shopping cart.
- Continue to use gates at the top and bottom of stairs and safety devices on windows. Supervise closely when the child is on stairs.
- Ensure that the child wears a bicycle helmet when riding in a seat on an adult's bicycle, on a tricycle, or on a bicycle with training wheels. Wear a helmet yourself.
- Teach the child to use caution when approaching dogs, especially if the dogs are unknown or are eating.
- Ask any questions you have about how to prevent dental injuries and how to handle dental emergencies, especially the loss or fracture of a tooth.

Provide the child's caregivers with the dentist's emergency phone contacts and ensure that the caregivers are familiar with how to handle oral health emergencies.

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At 12 months:

- Begin brushing the toddler's teeth with a pea-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste.
- Make an appointment for the toddler's first dental examination and risk assessment.
- To protect the child's teeth, do not put the child to bed with a bottle, prop it in the child's mouth, or allow the child to feed "at will."
- Continue to encourage the toddler to drink from a cup. Wean the toddler from the bottle.

At 15 and 18 months:

- Continue to brush the toddler's teeth with a pea-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste. Children under four to five years of age will continue to need help since they do not have the manual dexterity to clean their own teeth adequately.
- Schedule the toddler's first dental visit if it has not already taken place.

At three years:

- Begin teaching the child to brush teeth with a pea-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste.

At four years:

Ensure that the child brushes her teeth twice a day with a pea-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste. Regularly supervise the toothbrushing.

If the child regularly sucks a pacifier or fingers or thumb, begin to intervene to help the child discontinue the habit.



Review

Chart with assessment of child's oral health

Appropriate screening/referral

Follow-up

Utilization review (appropriateness/quality of care)

Policies of dental professional and health professional regarding quality of care

Clinical treatment should be administered according to accepted guidelines

Outcomes

- ☞ Parents are informed of oral development issues
- ☞ Parents and child are informed of and practice preventive oral health care
- ☞ Child receives appropriate fluoride supplementation
- ☞ Child uses car safety seat or safety belt
- ☞ Child wears appropriate play and athletic protective gear
- ☞ Child is under the care of a dentist
- ☞ Child has no active carious lesions
- ☞ Child has healthy oral soft tissues
- ☞ Child has functional occlusion

Treating Oral Injuries Immediately

It had all happened so quickly that Dwayne hadn't even started to cry when he walked up to Ms. Henry, his preschool teacher, with a bleeding lip and a chipped tooth. A second earlier, he'd been playing with Sebastian, but now he had an injury that needed immediate attention. As soon as Ms. Henry calmed down Dwayne and the other children and put some ice on his lip, she took a good look at his chipped tooth and called Dwayne's mother to tell her what had happened. Ms. Henry looked at the chart Dr. Lee had given the teachers during the previous week's training on what to do for dental injuries and she instructed Dwayne's mom to take him to a dentist that afternoon. The next day at school it was hard to believe that anything had happened. Dwayne and Sebastian were back together playing at the computer and Dwayne's tooth had been restored by his dentist. It looked good as new! 



