

Is your child at risk for dental caries (tooth decay)?

Risk level

Our assessment of your child's risk of developing tooth decay in the next year or so is:

Low dental caries risk

Ways to stay at low risk are:

- Use ADA-approved fluoride toothpaste (one pea-sized amount, especially at bedtime).
- Choose food wisely by following the Food Guide Pyramid.
- Encourage your child to drink milk or water instead of soda pop and fruit juices.
- Visit your dental professional as prescribed.

High dental caries risk

The primary factor(s) contributing to your child's high level of risk are:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bacteria: | <input type="checkbox"/> Active caries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recent history of caries | <input type="checkbox"/> Primary caregiver's recent history of caries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visible plaque on teeth | <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate fluoride exposure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dietary habits _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical factors _____ | |

Ways to reduce the risk of future tooth decay for your child are:

- Cut down the frequency of sugary, sticky, and starchy food. Reduce long exposure to these foods on your child's teeth.
- Drink less soda pop and other sugary beverages.
- Apply sealants to appropriate teeth.
- Use a prescribed anti-bacterial mouthrinse for two weeks (*for those older children who can rinse and spit out and have active tooth decay present.*)
- Advise primary caregiver to control his or her own tooth decay.
- Improve oral hygiene habits such as brushing and flossing.
- Increase fluoride exposure:
 - Fluoride toothpaste
 - OTC fluoride rinse
 - Fluoridated water
 - Fluoride supplements
 - Fluoride applications
- Visit your dental professional as prescribed.

(continued)

Special caries management appointments

- More frequent dental visits to monitor efforts to reduce high risk level.

Additional comments: _____

Anticipatory Guidance

Age 3

- Begin teaching your child how to brush using a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste.
- Finish brushing your child's teeth because they do not have the dexterity to do a good job of brushing on their own.
- Dispense the toothpaste to lessen the chance your child puts too much toothpaste on their toothbrush and ends up swallowing it.
- Choose food and beverages wisely. Slowly dissolving and sticky foods remain on teeth longer and then increase the time these foods are available for the bacteria-causing tooth decay to use to produce acids that cause tooth decay.
- Limit "grazing" behavior (e.g., eating throughout the day). The more exposures to cooked starches and sugars increase the chance your child will develop tooth decay.

Age 4

- Ensure that your child is brushing their teeth twice a day using a pea-sized amount of fluoridated toothpaste.
- Regularly supervise toothbrushing.
- Begin to intervene, if your child uses a pacifier or sucks their fingers or thumb.
- Discuss how and when your child's baby teeth begin to fall out.

Age 6

- Encourage your child to wear protective sports gear, such as a bike helmet and mouthguard.
- Continue to encourage healthy eating habits.

Age 8

- Assist your child in learning how to floss.
- Learn how to handle dental emergencies, and teach your child how to handle them.
- Advise your child not to smoke or not use smokeless tobacco.

Age 10

- Discuss the dangers of smoking and smokeless tobacco use with your child.
- Discuss bulimia and the effects that eating disorders have on teeth.

Adolescence

- Discuss how certain dietary practices can promote tooth decay (e.g., soda pop drinking and frequent snacking)
- Continue to encourage healthful eating habits.
- Emphasize the importance of wearing protective sports gear and seat belts to reduce the chance of injury to the face and mouth.
- Discuss bulimia and the effects that eating disorders have on teeth.
- Discuss the dangers of tobacco and other drug use with your teen.