

Dental care and dental decay

What is dental care and dental decay?

- Keeping your child's teeth and gums healthy is important for their overall health.
- Tooth decay happens when bacteria on teeth start to damage the tooth enamel.
- When teeth break down, cavities and infections can happen, causing pain.

Symptoms of toothache or tooth decay



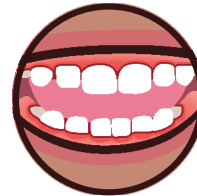
Throbbing pain



Change in tooth colour



Fever



Sore or bleeding gums

How to prevent tooth decay



Clean your child's teeth and gums every day, after eating and before bed



See the dentist or hygienist regularly (twice per year)



Do not let your child fall asleep on the breast



Do not let your child fall asleep with juice, milk or other sweetened liquid in their mouth

Baby: Wipe baby's gums with a clean, damp cloth after feeding.

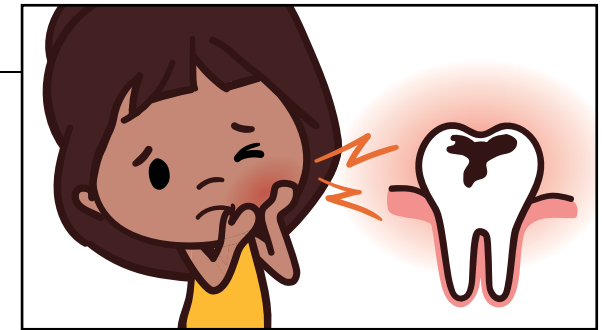
Baby teeth (under 3): Brush with a soft toothbrush and a rice grain-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.

Age 3+: Brush twice a day for 2 minutes each time.

Age 3 to 6: With help, your child can usually brush their own teeth.

How to treat toothaches

- Cold pack applied to cheek for 10 to 20 minutes and repeat.
- You can give acetaminophen or ibuprofen for pain or fever. Ask the health-care provider if you are unsure how much to give.
- Avoid very hot or very cold foods and drinks.
- Referral to a dentist or hygienist.
- The nurse may consult a doctor or dentist for antibiotics. Finish all the antibiotics, even if your child improves.



Go back to the clinic if your child has:



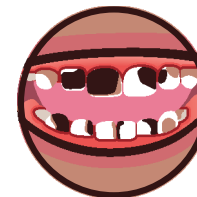
Been on medication for 3 days but the pain is getting worse



A fever



Swelling of the face



Blackened teeth

For more information, contact your health-care provider.