

Why Visit the Dentist?

- Every child deserves a healthy start in life!
- Dental health is an important part of overall health!
- Dental problems can begin early in life – as soon as the first tooth comes in. It is much easier to prevent dental disease than to treat it!
- 1 in 4 elementary school age children have tooth decay!



My Plan's Name: _____

My Dentist's Name: _____

My Dentist's Phone #: _____

My Dentist's Address: _____

To make an appointment, call your dentist. If you don't know who your dentist is or would like to change dentists please call your dental plan at:



1-888-414-4110



1-888-703-6999



1-800-977-7307

If you are having trouble with your dental plan, or getting through to your dental plan please call, The Department of Managed Health Care at: **1-888-466-2219**

If you do not know what dental plan you are in or would like to change dental plans please call Health Care Options at: **1-800-430-4263**



Dental Health Begins with Your Child's First Tooth

Los Angeles County



dentalmanagedcare@dhcs.ca.gov

When Should Your Child See the Dentist?

Age 0-1 year

When?

You should make an appointment for your child's first dental visit as soon as their first tooth comes in or by their first birthday, whichever comes first. See the back of this brochure for help finding a dentist in your plan.

Why?

Cavities can start as soon as the first tooth comes in, so it's important to have your child's first dental visit as soon as possible. At the first visit ask how to brush your child's teeth, and talk to your dentist about fluoride and how you can help prevent cavities.

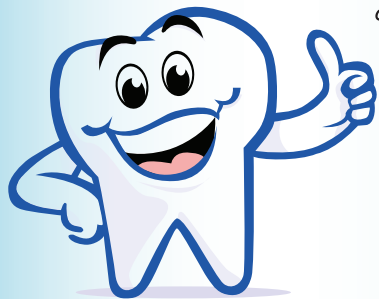
Age 2+ years

When?

Every six to twelve months, or as recommended by your child's dentist.

Why?

By the time kids are in kindergarten, 50% already have dental problems. Regular dental visits can help catch early signs of cavities and stop new cavities from forming.



How Can You Help?

Age 0-1 year

How can you help?

If you give your baby a bottle at bedtime, only give water in the bottle - no milk, formula, juice, or sweet drinks. Gently wipe your baby's gums with a washcloth until the first tooth arrives - then switch to a soft toothbrush.

Age 1-2 years

How can you help?

Brush your child's teeth in the morning and before bed with a tiny dab of fluoride toothpaste. Look closely for any signs of early cavities (chalky white-brown areas on teeth near gums). Ask your medical doctor to apply fluoride varnish to your child's teeth at well-child checkups. Your child should now be drinking from a cup, not a bottle. Give milk or juice only at mealtimes and give water in between.

Age 2-6 years

How can you help?

Continue brushing your child's teeth every morning and before bed with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Children under 7-8 years old can't do a good job without your help, but let them practice after you have done your part. Limit sugary drinks and foods every day.

Age 6-12 years

How can you help?

Let children brush their own teeth but continue to help them to be sure they are doing a good job. Help them floss their teeth before bed. Talk to your child's dentist about dental sealants and fluoride to prevent cavities. Continue to limit sugary drinks and foods every day.

Age 12+ years

How can you help?

Continue to check your child's brushing at least twice a day. Limit sports drinks and sodas, and avoid energy drinks altogether. Talk to your child's dentist about dental sealants to prevent cavities and mouth guards for sports.

At any age

How can you help?

You, the parent, can help prevent cavities. Ask your medical doctor to apply fluoride varnish to your child's teeth at well-child checkup visits. Don't share toothbrushes. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Your doctor and dentist are there to help.