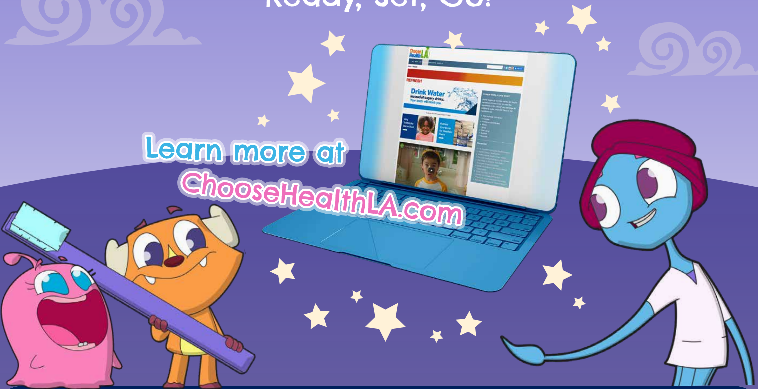
LOVE Your Baby's Teeth

Taking care of baby teeth gives your child's smile a happy and healthy start.

Wipe, brush, and visit the dentist.

Ready, Set, Go!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It's time to get ready for baby's oral health care and it starts with prenatal care.

During Pregnancy

Taking care of your oral health throughout pregnancy sets the foundation for your baby's oral health.
Healthy habits start with you!

- Go to the dentist during pregnancy.
- It's safe to have exams, X-rays, cleanings, and dental treatment throughout pregnancy.
- By going to the dentist during pregnancy you can avoid swollen gums (gingivitis), which can be caused by hormonal changes during pregnancy.
- Brush teeth for two minutes with a fluoride toothpaste twice a day.
- Avoid sugary drinks and foods. Choose healthy snacks like fruits and vegetables. Drink water throughout the day.
- Floss every day.

After feeding, wipe those gums!

0-6 months

Start wiping the gums even before the first tooth comes in.

- Put your baby to bed without a bottle in their mouth.
- Gently wipe your baby’s gums with a washcloth or a finger toothbrush after every feeding.
- To ease teething pain, use a clean, cold teething ring, or apply a cold, wet washcloth.
- To keep cavity-causing germs out of your baby’s mouth, clean pacifiers, utensils, teething rings, and baby-bottle nipples in soap and hot water, a bottle warmer, or a dishwasher after each use and whenever they get dirty. Parents and caregivers should avoid putting these items in their mouths. This can pass cavity-causing germs to your baby’s mouth.

Got a tooth? Brush it clean!

6-12 months

And take them to the dentist by the time they turn 1!

- Once a tooth comes in, use a soft children’s toothbrush with a smear of fluoride toothpaste, about the size of a grain of rice, to brush the teeth twice a day.
- Lift the lip to check your baby's teeth along the gumline for small white or brown spots. Do this often, at least once a week; these could become cavities.
- Visit the dentist when your baby’s first tooth comes in or by the time they turn 1.
- Ask the dentist if your baby should have a thin coat of fluoride (fluoride varnish) applied to their teeth.
- Avoid sugary drinks and foods.

Make it the routine to keep teeth clean!

1-3 years

Start making toothbrushing and visiting the dentist a regular habit.

- If they haven't had their first visit to the dentist yet, make an appointment.
- Ask the dentist if your child should have a thin coat of fluoride (fluoride varnish) applied to their teeth.
- After the first visit to the dentist, go every 6 months, unless otherwise advised by their dentist.
- Continue to brush teeth twice a day for two minutes with a smear of fluoride toothpaste the size of a grain of rice.
- Continue to lift the lip to check your baby's upper front teeth for small white or brown spots along the gumline. Do this often, at least once a week; these could become cavities.
- By now your child has a full set of teeth, don't forget to also check their back teeth.
- Avoid sugary drinks and foods.
- If the teeth are touching, it's time to start flossing.

Show them the way to brush teeth twice a day!

3-5 years

Help your kids learn how to brush and floss.

- Continue brushing their teeth twice a day for two minutes. Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Make it fun by singing a toothbrushing song! After brushing, children should spit out and not swallow toothpaste.
- Let them try to brush and floss their teeth while they watch you brush and floss yours. Kids learn by copying us! After they've tried, brush and floss your child's teeth for them so their teeth are totally clean.
- Continue going to the dentist every 6 months, unless otherwise advised by their dentist.
- Talk with your dentist if your child is older than 3 and uses a pacifier or puts their thumb or fingers in their mouth.
- Ask the dentist if your child's teeth should get a thin coating of fluoride called fluoride varnish.
- Avoid sugary drinks and foods.
- Floss daily between teeth that touch.

It’s time to meet their grown-up teeth!

6-12 years

Even though they’re still a kid, their adult teeth are coming in.

- The first adult teeth (molars) come in around age 6.
- Make sure your child brushes twice a day with fluoride toothpaste for two minutes and flosses daily. Until age 7 or 8, help your child by brushing and flossing their teeth for them after they’ve tried.
- Continue going to the dentist every 6 months, unless otherwise advised by their dentist.
- Ask the dentist for a protective coat called a sealant.
- Ask the dentist if your child’s teeth should get a thin coating of fluoride called fluoride varnish.
- Avoid sugary drinks and foods.

Healthy Habits, Happy Teeth!

12+ years

Caring for your child's mouth leads to a lifetime of happy, healthy smiles!

- Your child's adult teeth are almost all in. Second molars come in around age 12.
- Make sure your child is brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste for two minutes and flossing every day.
- Make sure your child routinely goes to the dentist.
- Ask the dentist for a protective coat called a sealant.
- Ask the dentist if your child's teeth should get a thin coating of fluoride called fluoride varnish.
- Avoid sugary drinks and foods.
- Keeping teeth clean and gums healthy takes more effort when your child has braces. Make sure they brush and floss thoroughly.

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