



General information

Always show your child's PrimeWest Health membership card at the dentist's office. If your child is not able to keep an appointment, call the dentist's office as soon as possible to cancel it.

If you need a ride to the dentist, call the PrimeWest Health Member Transportation Line at 1-866-814-6643. TTY users call 1-800-627-3529 or 711. These calls are free. Please call at least two business days before you need the ride.

For help finding a dentist, call PrimeWest Health Member Services at 1-866-431-0801. TTY users call 1-800-627-3529 or 711. These calls are free.

Sources: American Dental Association (ADA) and WebMD



©iStock.com/CEFutcher, ©iStock.com/4774344sean, ©Rawpixel/Adobe Stock, ©iStock.com/usas

PW_06-15_293R_06-23

DHS_Accepted_06/29/2023

1-866-431-0801 (toll free); TTY 1-800-627-3529 or 711

Attention. If you need free help interpreting this document, call the above number.

Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para interpretar este documento, llame al número indicado arriba.

Chú ý. Nếu quý vị cần được giúp đỡ dịch tài liệu này miễn phí, xin gọi số bên trên.

注意：如果您在理解本文件时需要免费帮助，请拨打上述号码。

LB2 (10-20)



GROWING UP with good oral health

Starting good oral health habits now will help make sure your child can show off a healthy smile for years to come!

Look inside for information on the following:

- ✓ Keeping your child's mouth and teeth healthy
- ✓ Dental emergencies



Keeping Your Child's Mouth Healthy

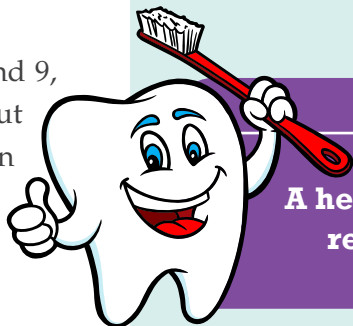
Don't delay. Prevent tooth decay!

Helping your child learn good oral health practices now can prevent problems later. One of these problems is tooth decay. Tooth decay is another term for cavities. It is damage to the teeth caused by bacteria that live in the mouth. Snacking between meals and sugary drinks are leading causes of tooth decay. It can also be caused by poor oral health practices. .

Tooth decay is painful and can make it hard to sleep at night. Without a good night's sleep, it's difficult to focus on school during the day. Tooth decay can also make it hard to eat and can lead to weight loss and poor speech development.

The good news is that tooth decay can be prevented. Follow the tips in this brochure, have your child see the dentist regularly, and look into getting fluoride varnish applied to your child's teeth. This helps prevent tooth decay and can be provided by your dentist or primary care provider. Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Public Health may offer it, too.

If your child is between the ages of 6 and 9, you may also want to ask the dentist about applying dental sealants. These are thin plastic coatings that are painted on the chewing surfaces of molars (back teeth). They help protect against tooth decay.



A healthy mouth will help the rest of your child's body stay healthy, too!

Tips for good oral health

- Make sure your child uses the right amount of toothpaste. Starting around age 3, move from a rice-sized amount to a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Help younger children with brushing, and supervise brushing until age 8 or 9.
- Make sure your child brushes 2 times a day, in the morning and before bed.
- Make sure your child flosses once a day.
- Do not let your child eat sugary, sticky snacks between meals. (If your child sneaks a sweet treat, make sure it's followed by brushing.)
- Limit the amount of soda pop that your child drinks. Soda pop contains acid, which gradually eats away the tooth surface (enamel). This leads to tooth decay. Other sugary drinks like fruit juices and sports drinks can cause the same problems.
- Have a dentist check and clean your child's teeth at least once a year.



Dental Emergencies—What Should You Do?

Dental problems can be painful. You may be tempted to take your child to the emergency room (ER). However, that is not always the best choice. A dentist is the best person to treat dental problems, and ERs don't usually have a dentist on staff. ER staff can only treat symptoms and can't address the true problem. So, call the dentist if your child has a dental emergency. Of course, there are always exceptions: if your child is in immediate danger, go to the ER or call **911**.

Dentists can identify and treat illnesses or injuries to the teeth, gums, tongue, and mouth *before* they become emergencies.



©iStock.com/Ozgur_Donmaz, ©iStock.com/carlofranco, ©iStock.com/michaeljung

Prevention

Injuries to the mouth and teeth often happen during physical activities like sports. One easy way to prevent injuries is to encourage your child to wear a protective mouth guard during these activities.