

Oral Health Care Information

Mixed Dentition

Dental Development

- ♦ Around age 6, children begin to lose primary teeth and gain permanent teeth.
- ♦ The "Your Child's Teeth" booklet has a chart demonstrating typical patterns of eruption and shedding.
- ♦ As permanent teeth come in, crowding can occur. Crowded areas and areas where teeth are rotated are more difficult to clean, so please pay close attention to these areas.
- ♦ Dr. Moses will monitor your child's "bite" as his/her permanent teeth come in. As your child grows, his/her bite will continue to change. If Dr. Moses sees potential problems, he will refer you to an orthodontist for evaluation and treatment.

Diet & Nutrition

- ♦ A well-balanced diet is important in your child's growth and development (including their teeth and soft tissues).
- ♦ Snacks containing sugars and carbohydrates can be harmful to your child's teeth. Brushing after these snacks can be especially helpful in preventing decay.
- ♦ Please see our green sheet included in your folder for more details on snacking choices.

Brushing & Flossing

- ♦ Brushing and flossing techniques will be reviewed at each check-up visit.

Brushing

- ♦ Teeth should be brushed every morning after breakfast and every night before bed (night time is the most important). Brushing after snacks is also very helpful in preventing decay.
- ♦ Children need adult assistance until 7-8 years of age. When your child can write in cursive, his/her fine motor skills are developed enough to thoroughly remove plaque.
- ♦ Teeth should be brushed one at a time, in a circular motion, on every surface of the tooth. The gums and tongue should be brushed as well.

Flossing

- ♦ Teeth should be flossed at least once every day (preferably at night).
- ♦ Most primary teeth have large enough spaces between them that flossing is not necessary. As your child gains permanent teeth, they will need to floss all areas where teeth make contact. An adult may need to help them until they can floss effectively.
- ♦ To floss effectively:
 1. Wrap the floss around your middle fingers and pinch tightly with pointer fingers and thumbs.
 2. Slide the floss into the contact area and cup it around one of the teeth (the floss should be shaped like a "C").
 3. Now slide the floss up and down, going into the edge of the gums.
 4. Cup the floss around the other tooth and repeat. Repeat this through the entire mouth.

Fluoride

- ♦ Fluoride is a natural mineral that helps to prevent cavities and repair early stages of tooth decay.
- ♦ Fluoride can be obtained topically and systemically, but is most effective when these methods are combined. Drinking fluoridated water, using fluoride toothpaste, and receiving regular fluoride treatments at check-ups can help your child to be cavity-free.
- ♦ If the water in your area is not fluoridated and your child is not receiving the proper amount of fluoride, Dr. Moses can provide you with a prescription for a fluoride supplement.

Sealants

- ♦ A sealant is a thin layer of plastic that is bonded to the biting surfaces of back teeth where decay occurs most often. The sealant fills in grooves to keep plaque out and provide a smooth surface that is easy to clean.
- ♦ Dr. Moses recommends sealants on all permanent molars. Sealants are also recommended on primary molars and front teeth with deep pits and grooves that are more susceptible to decay.
- ♦ When compared to teeth that have not been sealed, children with sealants can have as much as an 80% reduction in cavities.

Traumatic Injuries

- ♦ While we hope that your child never experiences a dental injury, we would like to help prepare you in case an emergency situation arises. Please see our red sheet included in your folder for details relating to specific emergency situations.
- ♦ Injuries severe enough to cause bleeding or fracture teeth should be evaluated by Dr. Moses.
- ♦ Change of tooth color or red/swollen gums are not normal and can indicate dental infection even when the child is in no apparent discomfort.
- ♦ We are always available to see emergencies, so please do not hesitate to call. If the office is closed, Dr. Moses can be reached at home or on his cell phone.

Sports Guards

- ♦ If your child is active in sporting activities, he/she has an increased risk of experiencing a dental injury.
- ♦ We can make custom mouth guards to help protect your child's teeth, lips, and face from injury.

Future Dental Visits

Check-ups

- ♦ In most cases, children should be seen every 6 months to ensure adequate dental care and to reinforce good dental habits. This time period also allows prompt diagnosis and treatment of any conditions that may pose a problem in the future.
- ♦ Check-up visits will include a full exam, cleaning, fluoride, x-rays (once a year), and instructions for proper brushing and flossing. Dr. Moses will also meet with you after each visit to go over x-rays, plan any needed treatment, and answer your questions.

Treatment

- ♦ Dr. Moses will always consult with you after each visit to discuss any future dental treatment your child may need.
- ♦ Dental work appointments are scheduled specially for your child's needs and can be set up with the front office personnel.