



Important Note About The Age-One Dental Exam

When should baby's first visit to the dentist be scheduled?

Baby's first visit to the dentist should be within six months of the eruption of the first tooth or no later than the child's first birthday. A baby's first teeth usually begin to come in between the ages of six months and one year. These "baby" or "primary" teeth are important in speaking, chewing, and holding space in the jaw for the permanent teeth that are developing below the gums.

What can you expect at baby's first dental visit?

An "age-one visit" to the dentist is analogous to a "well-baby visit" to the pediatrician. During the first appointment the dentist will examine the baby's mouth, teeth, and gums and evaluate habits. The dentist will also show the parents how to properly clean baby's teeth and gums. Fluoride varnish may be applied.

Many times the dentist may request that the parent hold the child on the lap with the child facing the parent. When the parent is ready the child will be lowered backwards so that the head rests on the dentist's lap. The parent will hold the child's hands and the child may cry which is normal and actually helps with the exam.

After the exam the parent can raise the child and take a few moments to comfort baby. A future schedule of dental visits for the child will be determined at this first visit. *The Age-One Dental Exam is an important start of a lifetime of preventive care.*

Tooth Brushing Recommendations

- Parents should brush their children's teeth until age 7 or 8.
- Brush teeth for 2 minutes with a soft bristled toothbrush using only a *smear* of toothpaste for children under two and a *pea-sized* amount for children over the age of two.
- Use a new toothbrush when bristles are bent or broken.
- Give a toddler a toothbrush to hold while you use a second brush to clean the teeth.

