

HEALTHY TEETH

Some parents think that it is not important for preschoolers to have healthy teeth because, after all, they are only “baby teeth.” But baby teeth are important! Read below to find out why it is important to keep these first teeth healthy.



Front teeth are needed for biting into many kinds of foods, like apples and pears. Without them eating is hard!

Teeth help your child learn to chew. This helps develop strong jaw muscles.



Permanent teeth form in the gums under baby teeth. Healthy baby teeth that stay in place assist in the proper spacing of permanent teeth.

Cavities and tooth decay are painful! This might affect your child’s food intake and result in poor nutrition and other health problems.

Parents of Preschoolers (Three to Four Years)

As a parent, there are ways to help your preschooler have healthy teeth. Follow these simple rules.



Set a good example! Your child learns by watching you. Let your preschooler watch while you brush your teeth.

Be sure your child brushes his or her teeth everyday with a soft toothbrush and a small amount (about the size of a pea) of fluoride toothpaste.

Take your child to the dentist for regular cleaning and check-ups every six months.



Limit sugary snacks to mealtimes. Tooth decay is not caused by the amount of sugar the child eats in a day, but by how often the sugary food is eaten.

Provide water with fluoride for your child. Fluoride is a mineral that helps the surface of the tooth become hard. A hard outer covering helps prevent cavities from forming. Most public water supplies in Alabama have added fluoride. Ask your WIC nutritionist or nurse if your water has fluoride. Read the label on bottled water, because many brands do not have fluoride.



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