

幼兒牙齒問題：抓住機會向孩子介紹牙科

Baby Teeth Matter: Embrace the Opportunity to Introduce Kids to Dentistry

By Kim Kiser, RDH-November 14, 2019

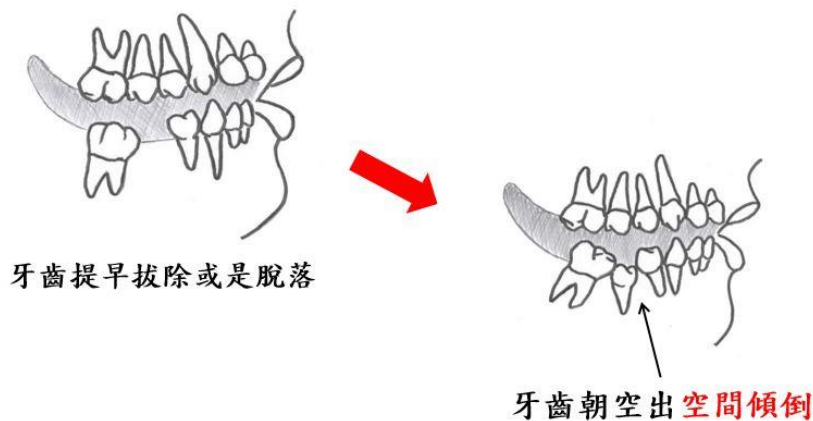


還記得第一次看牙醫是什麼時候嗎？

美國牙科協會建議在第一顆牙齒萌發後的 12 個月或 6 個月大時進行第一次牙科檢查。有些人可能會質疑在這麼小的年齡看牙的必要性。但是，儘早進行牙科拜訪可以最大程度地增加兒童擁有健康、快樂的笑容，並最終獲得健康的身體的機會。及早並定期的牙科檢查對牙齒、口腔和牙齦仍在發育的兒童特別重要。這能夠幫助他們的咀嚼、說話和微笑。

乳牙會為還在牙齦下方生長的恆牙保留空間。**當乳牙脫落得太早時，其他乳牙可能會向前傾倒至空的位置，使恆牙萌發時很難找到空間**(如下圖所示)。這可能會使牙齒排列歪斜或擁擠。這就是為什麼在良好的口腔照護能幫助幼兒在未來幾十年保護好他們的牙齒。

乳牙提早缺牙影響恆牙萌發



根據專家所說，及早治療蛀牙和牙齒異常，而不是拖到最後讓問題擴大，可以為患者節省時間、痛苦和金錢。更重要的是，健康的口腔可以幫助孩子保持自尊、營養和整體健康。

讓看牙變得有趣

兒童在接受牙科檢查時並不會像是一般成人的看診方式，牙科人員通常會嘗試使用不同的方法讓兒童及父母覺得有趣。

提醒父母盡量避免在正常的午睡時間或兒童疲倦的放學後預約看牙，並且在生病或不適時不要帶兒童去看牙醫。有些兒童會表現得很從容地走進診間，在看牙過程中會評估齲齒風險、檢查牙齒生長和發育、給予口腔衛生教育、清潔牙齒並塗氟。

但是，並非全部兒童都能夠如此從容，對於那些兒童，會採用了較慢的方法。首先牙科人員會自我介紹，並嘗試吸引兒童及其照護者。利用不帶威脅性的術語表述方式，像是太空椅、小蜜蜂、大象鼻子……等。如果兒童不願坐在椅子上，會鼓勵父母抱兒童躺在大腿上，以幫助兒童感到更舒適並習慣於看牙醫。

牙科人員會試著讓兒童觸摸並看到將要使用的所有物品，詢問他們對牙膏味道和牙刷顏色的偏愛，試著讓他們覺得有趣，也會給予很多的讚美和鼓勵。即使只是簡單地張開他們的小嘴 30 秒鐘，那 30 秒鐘對於評估他們的口腔健康也至關重要。

不斷獎勵兒童在看診時所做的努力。氣球、小禮物或診間內用來強調牙科診所是一個好玩的地方的任何方法都可以傳達一個重要信息給這些患者。牙科人員會盡量不讓兒童感到不舒適，尤其是年幼

的兒童。如果兒童沒有問題，並且他們不願意接受檢查，會建議在六個月內再次嘗試，180 天對於一歲或兩歲的兒童的生活改變會有很大的不同。

兒童教育

即使必須讓兒童及早進行牙科拜訪，更重要的是**每天在家裡的口腔照護**。刷牙可能是一些兒童和父母不喜歡的儀式。我們都知道有些兒童根本不想刷牙。有些人可能只是想自己動手，有些人可能只是太忙於玩具而不想去做像口腔衛生這樣無聊的事。

我們有責任幫助父母利用在家裡可以使用的技巧，確保他們以最好的方式照顧兒童的牙齒。以下是一些您可以與父母分享的例子，有助於在家中刷牙更有樂趣：

1. **讓兒童與父母一起刷牙** - 兒童喜歡模仿他們看到的東西，因此在父母刷牙時將他們帶入浴室，並讓兒童模仿父母的行為。
2. **使用大小合適的牙刷** - 如果太大或太小，清潔效果會不佳，因此請確保牙刷的大小適合兒童的年齡。選擇他們喜歡的類型或顏色。使其成為「他們的」，期望讓刷牙程序順利。
3. **僅使用適量的含氟牙膏(氟濃度 1000ppm 以上)** - 讓您的兒童參與挑選牙膏。可能是味道、包裝或字樣。無論出於何種原因，如果兒童自己挑選，他們可能會對使用它感到更加興奮(牙膏建議用量：未滿 3 歲-薄薄一層或米粒大小；3 歲以上-碗豆大小)。
4. **使用計時器** - 建議至少刷牙兩分鐘，因此設置計時器可以讓兒童知道他們何時完成，並在他們刷牙的整個時間給他們帶來成就感。
5. **刷牙歌曲** - 在手機上播放喜歡的音樂並刷牙直到結束，或者您可以搭配潔牙歌來讓兒童跟著歌曲潔牙。
6. **回饋他們的努力** - 像是貼紙、擊掌打氣、看喜歡的卡通，或者鼓勵兒童每天早上和晚上重複這一過程。

除了**每天刷牙兩次**，特別是在**睡前的潔牙**，並**清潔齒間縫隙**外，父母還需要注意**牙齒保健的營養**方面，包括：嘗試鼓勵吃健康的營養零食、在特殊場合或進餐時限制甜食。嬰兒應僅在奶瓶中添加配方奶粉或牛奶，並應在午睡或就寢前將其完成。避免在瓶中使用加糖水，果汁或軟性飲料。

掌握了有關如何照顧孩子牙齒的知識以及在家中進行口腔衛生照護時所使用的策略，希望我們孩子的小牙齒在通往幸福、健康笑容的道路上獲得一個良好的開端，並持續他們一生。

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Dentistry

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Do you remember your first dental visit? I do not; I was apparently too young to have any memory of that momentous occasion. However, thanks to my chosen profession, I am a part of many kiddos' first dental visit!

The American Dental Association recommends the first dental visit by age 12 months or six months after the appearance of the first tooth.² Some may question the need for their child to be seen at such an early age. Early dental visits, though, can maximize the chances for children to grow up with healthy, happy smiles, and ultimately a healthy body. Preventive dentistry is especially important for kids whose teeth, mouth, and gums are still developing.¹ They help him or her chew, speak, and smile.

Baby teeth also hold space in the jaws for permanent teeth that are growing under the gums. When a baby tooth is lost too early, the permanent teeth can drift into the empty space and make it difficult for other adult teeth to find room when they come in. This can make teeth crooked or crowded. That's why starting infants off with good oral care can help protect their teeth for decades to come.²

Treating cavities and abnormalities early rather than waiting for dental problems to fully develop saves patients time, pain, and money, according to experts. Even more importantly, A healthy mouth helps children maintain better self-esteem, nutrition and overall health.¹

Making it Fun

When those little people show up on my schedule, I have learned it is not a one method works for all type of situation. These patients are all so very different! I try my best to make it a fun and stress-free situation for both patients and parents.

Remind parents to try and avoid making appointments during normal nap time or after school when kids may be tired, and to never bring a child to the dentist if they are ill or not feeling well. Some children will act as if they have done it all before and march right in, and we get down to the business of assessing caries risk, checking growth and development, reviewing oral hygiene instructions, cleaning teeth, and placing fluoride.

Others do not, however, and for those patients, I take a slower approach. I always introduce myself and try to engage the patient as well as their caregiver. I use a show-and-tell approach with nonthreatening

nomenclature about the dental chair, tooth tickler, Mr. Thirsty... you get the idea. If the child is reluctant to get in the chair, I encourage Mom, Dad, or a grandparent to hold the child in their lap in the chair to help the child feel more comfortable and get used to the dental appointment.

I try to make the child a big part of the appointment, letting them touch and see all the things we will be using, asking for their preference of toothpaste flavor and toothbrush color, trying to make it fun for them. *Praise* usually goes a long way! Even if it is something as simple as opening their little mouths for 30 seconds, those 30 seconds can be crucial in assessing their oral health.

Always reward them for their efforts of being there. Balloons, a visit to the treasure chest, or whatever your office uses to reinforce that the dental office is a good and fun place to be can send a big message to those patients. One thing I don't do is push the child beyond their comfort level, especially the younger ones. If there isn't an area of concern or a problem the child is having, and they are not receptive to the prophylaxis and exam process, we will try again in six months; 180 days makes a huge difference in the life of a one- or two-year-old.

Kiddo Education

Even though it is imperative for children to be seen early by the dentist or hygienist, what's more important is what goes on daily in their homes. Brushing teeth can be a ritual that some kids and parents do not look forward to. I get it; some kids don't want to brush their teeth at all. Others may just want to do it all themselves, and others may just be too busy with their toys to slow down for something as boring as oral hygiene.

It's our responsibility to try and help educate parents with tips and tricks they can use at home to help ensure that they are caring for their little one's teeth in the best way possible. Here are a few examples you can share with parents to help make brushing a little more fun at home:

- 1. Let them brush with you** – Kids like to mimic what they see, so bring them into the bathroom with you when you are brushing and let them copy your actions.
- 2. Use the right size brush** – If it's too big or too small, it will be ineffective, so make sure that the toothbrush size is appropriate for the age of the child. Let them be involved in what type or color brush they want. It makes it "theirs" and hopefully will encourage the brushing routine.
- 3. Use only a pea-sized amount of low fluoride toothpaste** – Let your child be involved with picking out the toothpaste. It may be the flavor, the packaging, or the character on the front. Whatever the reason, if the child has picked it out, they may be more excited about using it.

4. Get a timer – It is recommended to brush for at least two minutes, so setting a timer lets the child know when he/she is finished and gives him/her a sense of accomplishment when they brush the whole time.

5. Brush to songs – Crank up a favorite tune on your phone and brush until it's over, or you can use the tune of "Row, Row, Row your Boat," but change up the words to "Brush, Brush, Brush your teeth."

6. Reward their efforts – It can be as simple as a sticker, a high five, watching a favorite cartoon or whatever encourages the little one to want to repeat the process every morning and night.

In addition to brushing twice daily and cleaning in between teeth when teeth begin to touch, parents also need to be aware of the nutritional aspect of dental care, including the following: Try to encourage eating healthy nutritious snacks, limiting sweets for special occasions or mealtimes. Infants should only have formula or milk in bottles and should finish them before naps or bedtime. Avoid using sugared water, juices, or soft drinks in bottles.³

Armed with this knowledge of how to care for their children's teeth and strategies to use when trying to start an oral hygiene routine at home, hopefully, our little dental patients will get a great start on their way to a happy, healthy smile that lasts them a lifetime.

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