



## Establishing a Dental Home

Visit your dentist regularly.

Your child's dentist will check the teeth for problems. Your dentist and dental hygienist can also help prevent cavities with cleanings, fluoride varnish and dental sealants.

## Dental Sealants

Dental sealants prevent **80%** of cavities in the first two years.<sup>4</sup>

Dental sealants are applied to deep pits and grooves on the teeth. They are a quick and easy way to prevent tooth decay.<sup>4</sup>



## References

1. American Academy of Pediatrics. (2019, February 1). [Brushing Up on Oral Health: Never Too Early to Start.](#)
2. American Dental Association (ADA). (n.d.). [Nutrition.](#)
3. Texas Department of State Health Services, Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. (2020, February). [Kindergarten Oral Health Screening Survey, 2018-2019.](#)
4. Centers for Disease Control (CDC). (2016, October 18). [Sealants.](#)

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OHIP-092

## Oral Health for Children



**TEXAS**  
Health and Human  
Services

Texas Department of State  
Health Services

**Healthy Teeth  
Make Healthy Kids**

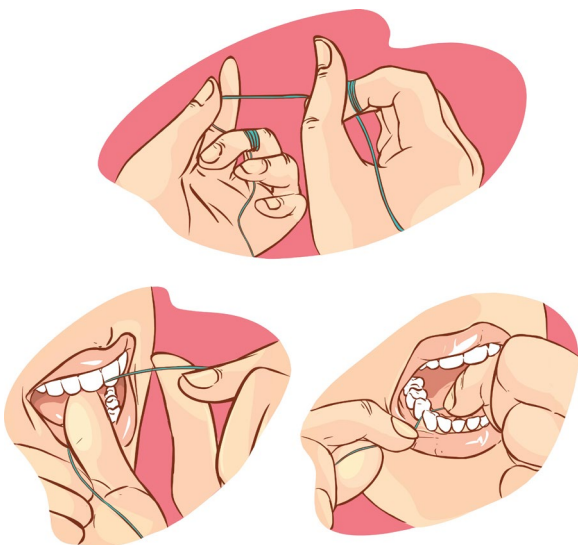
## Home Care

Children need help taking care of their teeth. Help them brush morning and night. Floss their teeth every day.

Children 3 years and older should use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.<sup>1</sup>

Brush your child's teeth for two minutes. This is about the amount of time it takes to sing the happy birthday song.

Floss your child's teeth at least once daily. Gently bring the floss between two teeth and down to the gum line. Wrap the floss around one tooth in the shape of the letter "C". Move the floss up and down the side of that tooth. Wrap the floss around the tooth on the other side and repeat. Continue this between all the teeth.



## Preventing Cavities

Cavities are preventable. You can help protect your child against tooth decay.

In addition to brushing and flossing, have your child drink fluoridated tap water. This will help strengthen your child's teeth to protect against cavities.<sup>1</sup>

In 2018, over half of Texas kindergarteners had a history of cavities. Only 78% had a routine dental check up in the past year. Schedule a routine checkup with your dentist to help your child remain cavity free.

## Nutrition

Try to avoid your child snacking or sipping on sugary foods and drinks throughout the day. This can put your child at a high risk of tooth decay.<sup>2</sup>

Eating a healthy diet is also important for your child's teeth.

Some healthy foods include:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Grains
- Dairy
- Lean proteins<sup>2</sup>

## Tips

- Play a song when brushing and flossing to make it fun.
- Your dentist will let you know how often to take your child in for visits.
- Keep healthy snacks available.
- Make sure your child drinks plenty of water. Even juice has sugar and acid that can cause cavities.
- Be a good example. Brush and floss your teeth with your children.
- Help your child brush and floss. If they brush by themselves, be sure to check for any areas they may have missed.

