

## The Age 1 Dental Visit



*smiles in motion*  
Pediatric Dentistry

**Parents often ask “When should my child first see a dentist?”** The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry strongly encourages the first dental visit by one year of age and the American Academy of Pediatrics agrees, suggesting that children who are at risk of early childhood cavities visit a pediatric dentist by age 1.

The thought of such an early dental visit is surprising to many parents. However, national studies have shown that cavities are increasing in preschool-aged children. More than 1 in 4 children in the United States has had at least one cavity by the age of 4. Many children get cavities as early as age 2. Early childhood cavities can have a detrimental impact on the baby teeth and overall health.

Prevention of early childhood cavities is the goal. To accomplish this parents need to understand their child’s risk for developing cavities. They should learn how to manage their child’s diet, provide proper use of fluoride and help perform adequate oral hygiene.

Cavities aren’t the only thing that parents should learn about their child’s dental health. The age 1 dental visit lets parents discuss:

- How to care for an infant’s or toddler’s mouth
- Proper use of fluoride and toothpaste
- Oral habits, including finger, thumb and pacifier sucking

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- *Ways to prevent accidents that could damage the face and teeth*
- *Teething and milestones of development*
- *The link between diet (including beverages) and oral health*

*After this visit the dentist will suggest a schedule of follow-up visits. As your child grows, the **Smiles in Motion** dental team wants to help you prevent common oral problems in your child.*

**Source**

American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry  
Policies and Guidelines

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