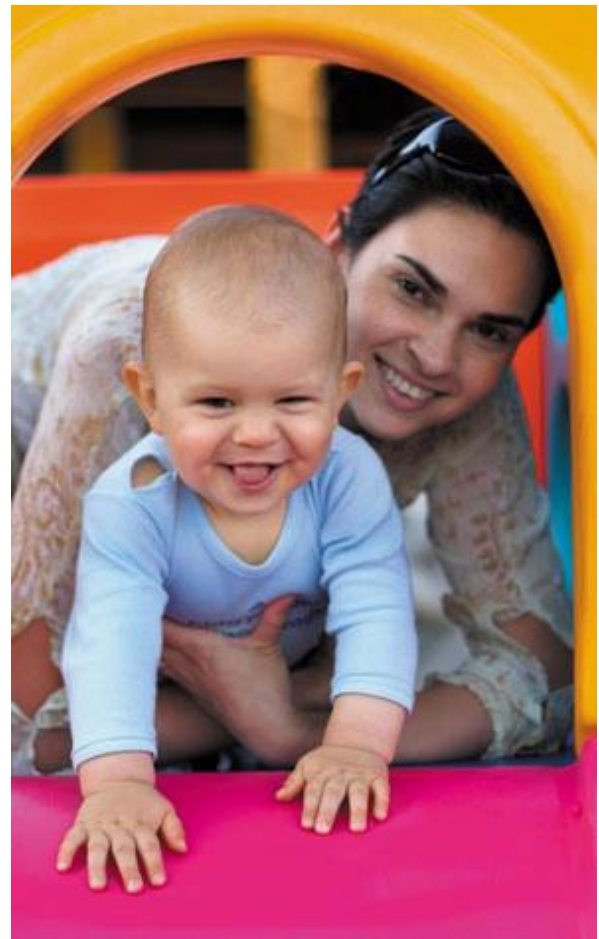


Simple ideas to protect your family's teeth from cavities.

Did you know that 48 percent of New Zealand five-year-olds have at least one cavity?^[1] That's right, nearly half of our five-year-olds are starting school with some tooth decay. That is why this month Colgate, Plunket and the New Zealand Dental Association launch a campaign to promote better oral health care.



From pre-pregnancy right through adult life, maintaining good oral health habits and practices is important not only to build strong teeth and gums, but also to keep yourself and your family fit, healthy and happy.

During March, Colgate, Plunket and the New Zealand Dental Association are joining forces to promote good oral health habits for Families Combat Cavities Month — to help ensure a brighter smile later in life! Although we all know the basics of oral care, not many of us can claim to have a

good knowledge when it comes to our family's specific needs at different ages. So to help you out, here are some dental health tips for children and families.

Prenatal maternal oral health

By the time your baby is born, a full set of primary teeth has begun to form underneath baby's gums. Because there is a greater risk of gum problems during pregnancy, it is a good idea to brush regularly with a toothpaste that protects gums. It is recommended that you visit your dental professional to discuss your dental care. And to top it off, a healthy diet and good dental hygiene ensure baby's teeth will be healthy and strong.

Age 0-2

Baby's front teeth will start peeking through the gums between six and 12 months, sometimes even earlier, and by 13 or 14 months molars emerge. Primary teeth are important for a healthy diet, learning to speak and for that beaming smile! So looking after these initial teeth is vital to your child's development on many levels.

- Clean baby's mouth, gums and tongue with gauze or a washcloth before teeth appear.
- Begin dental visits when the first tooth appears, no later than 12 months.
- It's a good idea to brush your baby's teeth at least twice a day; after breakfast and before bed.
- Use a child-sized toothbrush with only a smear of fluoride toothpaste.
- Signs of a healthy mouth include pink gums, white teeth and no mouth sores.

Ages 2-5

Between the ages of two and five, the roots of a child's baby teeth begin to dissolve, making way for permanent teeth.

- Remember to brush teeth at least twice a day; after breakfast and before bed.
- Continue helping your son or daughter to brush until at least six years of age.
- Use a child-sized toothbrush that is easy to hold and use a smear of toothpaste.
- Begin teaching your child to brush by holding the brush with him or her and guiding it around the mouth.

Ages 5+

Your child's first permanent teeth usually emerge at age six and with just two sets of teeth to last our lifetime, the development of permanent teeth is important to ensure good oral health in later life!

- Brush teeth at least twice a day; after breakfast and before bed.
- Teach children to brush their tongue to remove bacteria.
- Use a child-sized toothbrush that is easy to hold.
- Coach brushing until age 11.
- An adult should floss for children under age eight.
- Increase toothpaste to pea-sized amount as your child learns to spit after brushing.

And remember...

Good oral health starts at home. By making good oral health a fun daily activity your family can also combat cavities and help keep those smiles bright!

^[1] NZ Ministry of Health: Oral Strategy Document 2006

