



A Healthy Smile for Your Baby

Taking care of your baby's gums and teeth is important, and gives your baby a head start on growing healthy adult teeth for their entire life. Healthy baby teeth can make food easier to chew and permit clearer speech. Follow the guide below to keep track of your baby's dental health journey and infant milestones.

Infant Milestone

Hygiene

Feeding

Dental Visits

0–6 months



Clean baby's gums after every feeding, even if teeth haven't come in yet. Use a clean damp washcloth or toothbrush with a soft head and bristles.

Infants should be fed only breast milk or iron-fortified baby formula. Wait until your baby is one-year old before feeding them cow's milk.

Plan to visit the dentist as soon as baby's first tooth comes in.

Parent Tip: Do not put your baby to sleep with a bottle filled with breast milk, formula, juice, or anything sugary.

6–12 months



Begin brushing baby's teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day. Use a small smear of toothpaste (the size of a grain of rice) to brush the front and back of baby's teeth and gums.

Baby can begin eating solid foods once they can sit up on their own. Slowly begin to wean baby from bottles and pacifiers around 9–10 months.

If your baby hasn't yet, they should definitely see a dentist by the time they turn one-year old.

Parent Tip: If your baby has sore gums from teething, give them a cold teething ring, a cool spoon, or rub a cold washcloth on their gums.

12+ months



Regularly brush baby's teeth and gumlines, both front and back, twice a day.

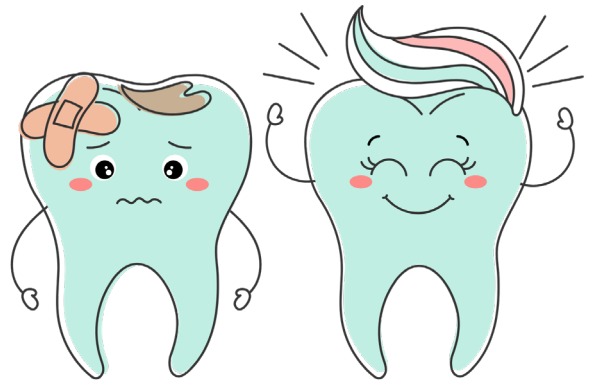
Eating solids and drinking from cups instead of bottles. Avoid feeding sugary sodas, juices, and other treats.

Visit the dentist twice a year, or any time your baby has pain, swelling, or any abnormalities in their mouth.

Parent Tip: Caries/cavities and tooth decay are transmissible. So, take care of your own dental health, and avoid passing germs from your mouth to your baby's. Do not taste bottles or spoonfuls of food before giving to your baby. If baby's bottle nipple or pacifier falls to the floor, clean it with water, not with your own saliva.

Help Your Baby's Teeth

Your baby's oral health relies on you!



Establish healthy dietary habits

Create a healthy diet for your baby with fruits, veggies, meat, and dairy.

Avoid giving your baby too many sweets by limiting candies and cookies; and giving them water instead of sugary drinks like fruit juice and soda.

The sugars found in whole fruit and milk are less likely to cause tooth decay.

If you'd like more information about healthy foods, diet planning, or just need help getting access to nutritious foods, call our **WIC Team at (808) 965-3030**.

Check baby's teeth and gums

Be sure to check your baby's gums and teeth often. A good time is whenever you're cleaning their gums or brushing their teeth. Gently open baby's mouth with a finger, and look for what can be early signs of tooth decay, such as:

- White or dark spots, or white lines on the teeth;
- Holes in the enamel;
- Pain in the mouth, teeth that are sensitive;
- Sensitivity to heat, cold, or sweets;
- Gums that are pulling away from the teeth.



Schedule Dental Visits

We provide keiki dental emergency care in addition to routine care. To schedule an appointment, please call (808) 333-3600.

Hilo Family Dental	1257 Kilauea Avenue, Suite 100, Hilo
Kea'au Family Dental	16-192 Pili Mua Street, Kea'au
Ka'ū Family Dental	95-5583 Mamalahoa Highway, Nā'ālehu
Kealakekua Family Dental	81-980 Halekii Street, Kealakekua
Kealakehe Family Dental	74-5214 Keanalehu Drive, Kailua-Kona
Waikoloa Family Dental	68-1845 Waikoloa Road, Suite 205, Waikoloa Village