



## **LITTLE DENTIST'S EDUCATIONAL POST**

**Edson Laranjeiras** - September 23, 2026 at 1:49 PM

### **TITLE: CARING FOR LITTLE TEETH**

**SIMPLE DAILY HABITS CAN HELP PROTECT CHILDREN'S TEETH FROM THE FIRST TOOTH THROUGH THE PRESCHOOL YEARS.**

#### **Start before the first tooth**

- Wipe your baby's gums gently with a clean, damp cloth.
- Avoid sharing spoons, cups, or pacifiers, because cavity-causing bacteria can spread through saliva.
- Do not dip pacifiers in sugar, honey, or other sweet foods. Honey should not be given to children under 12 months.

#### **Brush twice a day**

Begin brushing as soon as the first tooth appears.

- Use a small, soft-bristled toothbrush.
- Brush in the morning and before bedtime.
- Use fluoride toothpaste: Under 3 years: a tiny smear, about the size of a grain of rice. Ages 3–6: a pea-sized amount.
- An adult should do the brushing or closely supervise it. Young children do not yet have the skills to clean every surface.
- Encourage the child to spit out the toothpaste, but avoid vigorous rinsing with water.
- Replace the toothbrush when the bristles become worn or about every three months.



*Parent gently brushing a young child's teeth with a small soft toothbrush. Showing a tiny amount of toothpaste. In a bright friendly bathroom with no written text*

## Choose tooth-friendly drinks and foods

- Water is the best drink between meals.
- Offer regular meals and snacks rather than frequent grazing.
- Limit sweets, sugary drinks, flavored milk, and sticky snacks.
- Do not put a baby to bed with a bottle containing milk, formula, juice, or a sweet drink.
- If a child uses a bottle, begin offering a cup around 6 months and aim to stop bottle use around 12–18 months, according to family and professional guidance.
- Breast milk and formula provide important nutrition, but frequent or prolonged feeding at night after teeth appear may increase the risk of tooth decay. Ask a dental or health professional for personalized advice.

## Help with teething

Teething may cause sore gums, drooling, and a desire to chew.

- Offer a clean, chilled—not frozen—teething ring or a cool, damp washcloth.
- Gently massage the gums with a clean finger.

- Avoid products that numb the mouth unless specifically recommended by a health professional.
- Seek medical advice if your child has a high fever, seems very unwell, or has symptoms that are not typical of teething.

### **Visit a dental professional early**

- Arrange the first dental visit when the first tooth appears or by the first birthday.
- Regular check-ups help detect problems early and provide guidance about brushing, fluoride, diet, and habits.
- Ask about fluoride in your local drinking water and the best toothpaste routine for your child.
- Contact a dental professional promptly if you notice white or brown spots, pain, swelling, bleeding, or difficulty eating.

### **Make brushing easier**

- Use a song, timer, or favorite toothbrush to create a routine.
- Let the child choose between two toothbrushes or brush colors.
- Brush your own teeth together as an example.
- Praise cooperation and keep the routine calm and positive.
- For children who resist, gently and safely position them so you can see all tooth surfaces.

Healthy teeth help children eat, speak, sleep, and smile comfortably. Starting good habits early makes oral care easier for the whole family.

This material is educational and does not replace a professional consultation.