



# Children's Community Dental Clinic

Free for children 0-17 years

## Caring for your Baby/Toddler's Teeth

Baby teeth are important as they help your child to eat and to speak properly.

To give your child's teeth the best start we encourage you to:

- Brush teeth two times a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Give your child water to drink when thirsty, it is fresh and free
- Don't let your child sleep with a bottle in its mouth
- Keep sweet foods to meal times and try to give teeth a rest of 2 hours between eating
- Give sugar free snacks such as bread, cheese, vegemite, fresh fruit, vegetables, egg, plain crackers

To help prevent decay on your baby's teeth **AVOID**:

- Juice or sweet drinks, especially in their bottle
- Honey and other sweet things on a dummy
- Adding sugar and other sweeteners to first foods
- Foods that are high in sugar such as: muesli bars, fruit strings/snakes, lollies, chocolate, dried fruit and roll ups



For more information please contact your local  
Community Dental Clinic or phone 0800 Talk Teeth  
- 0800 825 583 or visit website: [www.ards.co.nz](http://www.ards.co.nz)



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## Cleaning your Baby/Toddler's Teeth

It is important to start cleaning your baby's teeth as soon as they appear:

- At first, wipe the teeth with a soft damp cloth after feeding
- As more teeth appear start using a small, soft toothbrush morning and night
- Use a small amount of toothpaste (no bigger than a cooked grain of rice)

### How to clean your child's teeth:

1. Sit or lie your baby on your lap, or stand behind your toddler, both facing the same way and reach around their head to brush their teeth
2. Lift the top lip and brush all top teeth in a downward motion
3. Gently lower the bottom lip and brush all bottom teeth in an upward motion
4. With an open mouth brush the biting surfaces of all teeth
5. Check you have brushed both the cheek and the tongue sides of the teeth
6. After brushing, encourage your child to spit the toothpaste out but not rinse with water



**Children learn by copying others. Try brushing your teeth together.  
An adult should help children with brushing until they are about 8 or 9 years old.**

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045-01-013 July 2019

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