

# **“10 Tips For Raising Cavity Free Children!”**

If you have kids, you know that introducing them to new things can be fun, challenging, exciting, frustrating, and so much more all that the same time!

I can still remember when my little niece got her first cavity. It was like a tornado hit the household. There were tears and tantrums and then two minutes later she was on to something new. Now she's growing up learning that she doesn't want cavities, and gets rewarded if she comes to the dentist office and leaves with an A+ on her dental report card.

When I was a child, we grew up almost expecting to have cavities when we went to the dentist. Having the doctor pry, poke, and drill was normal.

## **However, that is not the case anymore! Times have changed!**

Today, in our society, there are many benefits our children have, that we didn't have when we were younger. For example, kids today are growing up with fluoride in the water and have the benefits of sealants. People are becoming more aware of the importance of dental hygiene and parents know that they need to bring their children to the dentist.

I am offering this simple special report to give you a few quick, helpful tips that you can use to help your child grow up with healthy teeth, and prevent as many dental problems as possible.

## **When is the earliest a parent should start bringing their child to the dentist?**

Most dental books say when your child begins to have teeth, but that usually doesn't work out so well. Our policy is to have the parents bring the child when he/she is 2 ½-3 years old. I give them ride in the chair, lean them back and visit with them with mommy or daddy in the room. If they let me look in their mouth and count their teeth, I will. If they let me polish their teeth I will. Six months later, we do a little more. This usually gives the child a positive experience.

My philosophy is, if we teach the children to enjoy being at the dentist, when they need something done, they won't be afraid to let us help them. But if I look in their mouth and everything looks healthy we will give them a toothbrush, let them choose a prize and have them come back in six months. That way everything is fun.

Parents seem to like that, because when their children grow up not being afraid of the

dentist they will be more likely to enjoy the experience, and more likely to take good care of their teeth.

## **10 Tips For Raising Cavity Free Kids!**

- 1.** Begin cleaning your baby's mouth with a clean gauze pad the first week the child is brought home from the hospital. Although most babies don't have any teeth until about six months of age, a daily cleaning in infancy will get your child accustomed to the process, and ensure clean and healthy gums when the teeth do come in.
- 2.** By starting early, your baby is more likely to accept your cleaning her teeth later, when it is necessary to prevent tooth decay. Incorporate a toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste into the routine by the time your child reaches 18 months, or at the time his/her first molars come in.
- 3.** Your child's first visit to the dentist should be by the age of three. Although baby teeth will eventually fall out, they are very important to your child's dental development. The muscles of their mouth and jaw form around the foundation laid by their first set of teeth. We can make sure your child's dental development is proceeding normally.
- 4.** Stop your child's thumb sucking habits before the permanent teeth come in. Sucking on a thumb or pacifier is a natural and satisfying behavior for babies. However, the habit can alter the position of baby's developing teeth and the dental arches if it continues after the permanent teeth begin to erupt. Fortunately, the damage is usually self-correcting, unless your youngster continues the habit much past the age of four. If you are having trouble getting your child to stop sucking his thumb, we can offer some advice.
- 5.** Make sure your child gets the benefits of the latest in cavity prevention, including fluorides and sealants, if needed.
- 6.** Our office has the ability to check for cavities that hide from traditional methods of detection. By using an LASER CAVITY DETECTOR called the DIAGNODENT we can see inside the grooves of the tooth where cavities can hide. This can help prevent pain from undetected cavities, save tooth structure, and save you money.
- 7.** Do not give your child a bottle at night with juice or milk. If your child must have a bottle at bedtime, dilute it with water or use a pacifier.

8. If you live in a community where there is NO fluoride in the drinking water, use a fluoride rinse or buy bottled water that has fluoride.
  
9. You need to help a child under age 7 years old do the brushing. Studies show that children under 7 do not have the dexterity to do a good job. One great strategy if you have a child who likes to do everything on their own, is to let them brush first on their own. Then say that it's mommy or daddy's turn. I know that there are children who will fight you on brushing, but stick with it because the rewards will be huge.
  
10. Finally, the most important thing to realize is that children learn the behavior they observe. So, the reality is your dental health is just as important as your child's. When was the last time you had your dental check up and cleaning?

I hope this report has been educational and helpful. If you have any questions, or would like to schedule an appointment for your child or yourself, please **call us**, @ (732) 530-5111. We'd love to make your family part of ours!

Denise DiBona, DDS, LLC  
146 Maple Ave.  
Red Bank, NJ 07701  
**(732) 530-5111**

[www.DeniseDiBonaDDS.com](http://www.DeniseDiBonaDDS.com)