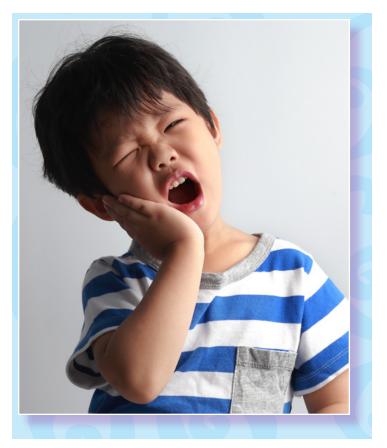
Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles



Getting Oral Health Treatment Is Important!

f your child's dentist finds tooth decay and recommends a follow-up dental visit for treatment, it's important for your child to get care. Receiving follow-up treatment is key to keeping your child healthy.



Why it's important to take your child for a follow-up dental visit for treatment:

- The dental team can treat tooth decay and prevent it from getting worse and causing an infection.
- Treating tooth decay can prevent pain, trouble sleeping, behavior problems, and difficulty concentrating.
- Treating tooth decay can stop it from spreading to other teeth in your child's mouth.

Tips to prepare your child for a follow-up dental visit for treatment:

- Be positive. For example, say, "The dentist will help keep your teeth healthy."
- Keep it short and simple. If your child asks what will happen at the visit, you can say "The dentist will fix your tooth."
- Don't talk about shots or possible pain.
- If you fear visiting the dentist, don't share your feelings with your child. This could scare them.
- Read books or watch videos together with your child about dental visits. Look for books or videos that show dental visits in a positive way. Don't read books or show

videos that use words like hurt, pain, shot, or drill. Ask a children's librarian, dentist, dental hygienist, child care provider, or teacher for recommendations.

- Let your child bring their favorite toy or blanket to the dental clinic.
- Ask one of the dental team members if your child will receive a small toy or new toothbrush at the end of their visit. Share this with your child.



This document was supported by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the United States (U.S.) Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$7,582,500 with 97% funded by ACF and 3% by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of, nor are an endorsement by, ACF/HHS or the U.S. government. This resource may be duplicated for noncommercial uses without permission.

National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety. 2022. Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles: Getting Oral Health Treatment Is Important! Washington, DC: National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety.



