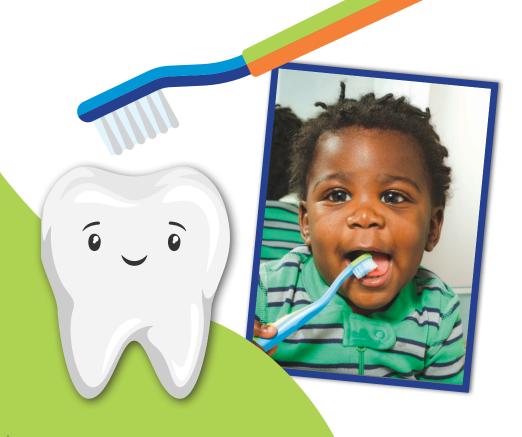
Thumb Sucking and Pacifier Use

How Can Thumb Sucking Affect My Child's Teeth? After permanent teeth come in, sucking may cause problems with the proper growth of the mouth and alignment of the teeth. It can also cause changes in the roof of the mouth.

Pacifiers can affect the teeth in essentially the same ways as sucking fingers and thumbs, but it is often an easier habit to break. The intensity of the sucking is a factor that determines whether or not dental problems may result.

How can I help my child stop thumb sucking and pacifier use?

- Praise your child for not sucking. Children often suck their thumbs when feeling insecure
 or needing comfort. Focus on correcting the cause of the anxiety, and provide comfort to
 your child.
- For an older child, involve him or her in choosing the method of stopping.
- Your dentist can offer encouragement to your child and explain what could happen to their teeth if they do not stop sucking.



A HEALTHY MOUTH:

An Important Part of Your Child's Wellness







For more information on childhood oral health, visit our website at www.alabamapublichealth.gov/oralhealth

Dental Visit

When to visit a dentist?

first tooth appears but no later than the first birthday. Why so early? As soon as your baby has The American Dental Association recommends the first dental visit should take place once the

teeth, he or she can get cavities.

What to expect at the first visit:

EXAMINATION

looking for signs of disease or other problems. His or her goal is to help maintain good Your dentist will perform a thorough examination of your child's teeth, gums, and mouth,

them as soon as possible. oral health and to prevent problems from becoming serious, by identifying and treating

SYAA-X

Depending on your child's age, risks of disease, and symptoms, your dentist may

to jawbones, impacted teeth, abscesses, cysts or tumors, and decay between the teeth. recommend X-rays. X-rays can diagnose problems otherwise unnoticed, such as damage

hygienist. Using special instruments, a dental hygienist will scrape below the gum line, Checkups almost always include a complete cleaning from your dentist or a dental CLEANING

other problems. Your dentist or hygienist may also polish and floss your child's teeth. removing built-up plaque and tartar that can cause gum disease, cavities, bad breath, and

What is a Cavity?

occur with aging make cavities an adult problem too. that destroys the tooth's enamel. Cavities are more common among children, but changes that Cavities refer to tooth decay, which occurs when specific types of bacteria (plaque) produce acid

How to avoid cavities:

DRINK FLUORIDATED TAP WATER!

Wean your child off of bottle-feeding when possible,

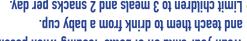
- and teach them to drink from a baby cup.
- Limit children to 3 meals and 2 snacks per day.
- Avoid foods high in sugar.

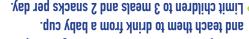
DO NOT PUT YOUR BABY TO BED WITH A BOTTLE!

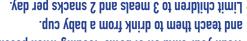
Avoid letting your child drink juice and soft drinks.

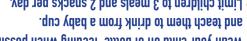
Choose healthy snacks like fruits and vegetables.

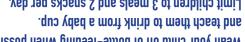


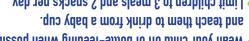


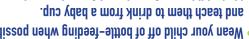


















emergency room.

Dental Emergencies

have 3 times as many cavities in the first molars as School age children (ages 6-11) without sealants

back teeth (molars) to protect them from tooth decay

applied to the grooves in the chewing surface of the

Dental sealants are thin plastic coatings that are

SEALANTS - Dental sealants are a quick, easy, and painless

Flossing regularly can build good habits for the future.

Choose a toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles.

Start brushing your child's teeth as soon as they appear.

Effective tooth brushing requires parent supervision and assistance.

Brushing teeth is important as it removes plaque (bacteria) from the surface of the teeth.

BRUSHING - Children's teeth should be brushed twice a day, especially before bed.

Children should be assisted by an adult.

Use age-appropriate fluoride toothpaste.

children who do have sealants.

for many years.

way to help prevent cavities.

may have missed.

FRACTURED TOOTH - Immediately rinse your mouth with warm water to clean the area. gums or in milk. CALL YOUR DENTIST.

Put cold compresses on the face to keep swelling down. CALL YOUR DENTIST.

compress. See your dentist or go to the emergency room if there is excessive bleeding that INJURIES TO TONGUE/LIP/CHEEK - Clean the area gently with water and apply a cold

won't stop or you are in a lot of pain.

in the socket without touching the root. If that's not possible, place it between your cheek and KNOCKED-OUT TOOTH - Keep the tooth moist at all times. If you can, try placing the tooth back

emergencies, it is important to call your dentist as soon as it happens or go to your nearest mean the difference between saving and losing your child's permanent tooth. For all dental

Accidents can happen anywhere, anytime. Knowing how to handle a dental emergency can

FLOSSING - Flossing helps to remove the plaque (bacteria) in between the teeth that brushing

gum tissue. CALL YOUR DENTIST. food caught between teeth. DO NOT PUT ASPIRIN on aching tooth or gum tissues. It may burn TOTHACHE - Rinse mouth with warm water to clean it out. Gently use floss to remove any