



Dental Care for School-Age Children

I want your child's visits to the Pediatric Dentist to be fun and positive. Every child deserves a Dentist who lays the foundation for a lifetime of good oral health.

Q. How often should children in this age-group visit the Pediatric Dentist?

A. We see your child every 6 months for examinations and cleanings. During these visits it is important for us to talk about oral hygiene and the increasing role your child assumes in their own oral health. We also discuss fluoride and your child's diet on their teeth, as well as what you can expect in terms of growth and dental development. We may also talk about the benefits of sealants, and habits such as thumb or finger sucking.

Q. What should we be doing at home?

A. Supervise and encourage your child's daily brushing and flossing routine. Reinforce to them why they need to brush for a full two minutes, twice a day – after breakfast and before bed. Remember parents rule. I advise parents to brush and floss their children's teeth until they are at least 10 years old, or when they can wash and rinse their hair totally on their own.

Q. When are X-rays first taken?

A. There is a strict protocol established by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry to which I adhere. However, there are times when circumstances arise and we need to take X-rays at other times. The information an X-ray gives me is very valuable in allowing me to take care of your child. Be assured that dental X-rays are very safe; we've come a long way in technology.

Q. What can be expected in terms of teething activity during this time?

A. The teething that you remember from baby days usually starts again at about 6 years old and off and on until early teenage years. Typically around age 6, front teeth and the first set of adult molars come in. Around age 7, it's the side teeth. Between 9 and 11 years old the canines (eye teeth) come in. Around age 12 the second set of adult molars comes into your child's mouth, and you guessed it, they are called the 12 year molars. Also around this time, your child's baby molars will be replaced by premolars. Remember, these are just approximate ages. If you have any questions or concerns just ask me and we'll talk about it; and vice versa.

Q. Are many children afraid of the Dentist at this age?

A. School-age children may or may not be leery of dental surroundings. Some children may cry, others may be hesitant, and still others will happily accept treatment. If concerns arise, please let me know and we will talk about how we can make your child more comfortable with their dental visits. As a Pediatric Dentist I have been trained in techniques to help make dental visits a positive experience.

Q. Are mouth guards important in children this young?

A. In one word, yes. Children this age are beginning to participate in recess, gym, after school athletics, and/or school sports, so it's important to be aware of injury prevention for dental and facial trauma, hence the importance of a mouth guard. Mouth guards are recommended at this age (and at all ages) for any sport that can lead to contact with a surface or another person, including but not limited to football, lacrosse, hockey, baseball, basketball, soccer, wrestling, karate, gymnastics, skateboarding, and bike riding.

Fern E. Cytryn, D.D.S. provides pediatric dentistry with a smile. "dr. red." as she is often called in honor of her hair, provides comprehensive pediatric dental services for children from infancy through young adulthood. For more information about Dr. Cytryn's practice, please call 845-634-3200 or visit www.drfernsmile.com.