

Children with Special Health Care Needs May Have-

- Teeth that come in late or early.
- Teeth that are crowded, turned, or out of position.
- Teeth with unusual size, shape, or number.
- Jaw size/shape that is unusual.

Cavities



Viral/fungal infection



Gum infection



Gum overgrowth



Establish a Dental Home

◆ Choose a Dentist

- For a list of dentists who will treat children with special health care needs, go to the Virginia Department of Health website: www.vahealth.org/dental/
- If your child has Medicaid, go to the Smiles for Children website: www.dmas.virginia.gov/dental-home.htm
- To find pediatric dentists in your area, call the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD)*: (312) 337-2169 or go to <http://www.aapd.org/finddentist/>
- To find general dentists in your area, call the American Dental Association (ADA)*: (312) 440-2500 or go to: <http://www.ada.org/public/directory/index.asp>

**Note:* This information will include dentists who belong to the AAPD or ADA. There may be licensed dentists in your area who do not belong to these organizations. When you call, ask if the dentist treats children with your child's condition.

- ◆ Visit a Dentist/Hygienist - two or more times a year.
- ◆ Make a Preventive Plan - for the dental office and daily home care!



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Virginia Department of Health
109 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
www.vahealth.org/teeth

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A Healthy Mouth for Children with Special Health Care Needs



A Parent's Guide



A HEALTHY MOUTH FOR YOUR CHILD

Goal

The best overall health for your child.

Increased Risk

Children with special health care needs are more likely to have dental problems because of:

- Medications
- Special diets
- Less spit in the mouth
- Lower motor skill development
- Parent's difficulty in brushing/flossing child's teeth (may need training)
- Problems finding preventive care and dental treatment



Prevention

Due to the higher risks, **prevention** is especially important for your child.

Partnership

Working together - you, your child, and the dental and medical providers can prevent or reduce problems.



Daily Care of the Mouth

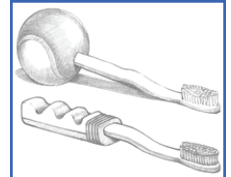
Brushing - Your child needs you to brush his teeth until he is able to do a good job on his own.

- Start brushing as soon as the first tooth comes in. Wipe the gums with a clean cloth.
- Brush at least 2 times a day - after breakfast and before bedtime.
- Use a small, soft tooth brush.
- Use a very small amount of fluoride toothpaste (under two years old—rice grain size; over two years old—pea size). Ask your dentist what to do if toothpaste causes your child to gag.
- Place brush at the gum line. Using small circles, brush all teeth on the front and back. Brush the grooves on the biting parts of the teeth.
- Brush the tongue.



Helpful Ideas -

- Try a battery powered toothbrush.
- Make the handle easier to hold. Use a tennis ball or bike handlebar grip.
- Sit with child on floor/bed with head in your lap

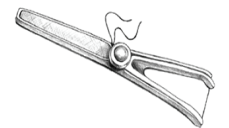


or stand behind and support head. Try using a bean bag or pillows.



- Ask the dentist about using a mouth prop to keep your child's mouth open during home care.

Flossing - Once a day. Try using a floss holder if needed.



Fluoride - Prevents cavities, repairs early decay. Ask about using fluoride paste, gel, rinse, and supplements.

