

Establish a Dental Home

Choose a Dentist* - Based on your situation, decide on a General Dentist or a Children's (Pediatric) Dentist.



Many **General Dentists** are comfortable treating children with special health care needs. Talk with a dentist about your child's condition to decide on the best dental home for your child.

A **Pediatric Dentist** specializes in taking care of children's teeth. After dental school, a pediatric dentist has an extra two to three years of training in dentistry for children. This training includes treatment of children with special health care needs. Based on your child's needs, you may decide on a pediatric dentist.

** See the back panel for information on finding a dental home.*

Visit Dentist /

Hygienist -

Most children should see a dentist or dental hygienist two times a year.



Your dentist may suggest your child visit every 3 - 4 months.

FINDING A DENTAL HOME

- 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.



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www.vahealth.org/teeth

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Visiting the Dentist



CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS



First Dental Visit - What to Expect

At the First Visit you should:

- * Get to know each other
- * Gather and share information
- * Have a relaxed, positive visit



Age of the First Visit - Your child's first visit should be by 1 year old.

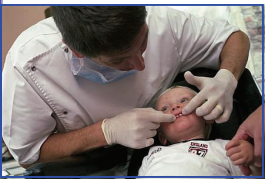
Gather Information - The dentist will talk with you about your child's medical history - **prenatal, developmental history, and current condition.**



Risk Assessment -

The dentist will ask questions to find out if your child is at low, moderate or high risk for cavities and gum disease. This information is used to make a plan to help **prevent** problems in the mouth.

Exam - For infants and toddlers, the dentist may take just a quick look at how the teeth are growing and the condition of your child's mouth.



As your child gets older the dentist will more thoroughly check the mouth, clean the teeth, and take x-rays.

VISITING THE DENTIST

Make Plans - Using all the information, the dentist will make a Preventive Plan and Treatment Plan for your child.

A Preventive Plan should include:

- ♦ The number of visits per year
- ♦ Fluoride use in the office and at home
- ♦ Dental sealants
- ♦ Daily home care instructions
- ♦ Diet counseling



A Treatment Plan should include:

- ♦ Taking care of dental needs - fillings, crowns, space maintainer, etc.
- ♦ Referrals to dental specialists - orthodontics, oral surgery, etc.

The "How to" of Daily Care -

The dentist/hygienist should give you detailed instructions on how to care for your child's teeth and mouth.



You should practice brushing and flossing so you feel comfortable.

Brush at least two times a day.



Floss once a day.



Dental Treatment

Dental treatment - Infants and young children often sit in their parent's lap or in a "knee to knee" position.



To safely calm your child, **laughing gas** (nitrous oxide) may be used. It is a mix of two gases, oxygen and nitrous oxide. It is breathed in through a mask over the nose.



A child may need more help to be relaxed and still during treatment. In some cases, **conscious sedation** (medicine given to your child to drink or given through the veins) is used. It calms your child and he stays awake and responsive.



Along with medication, a safety **restraint** may be used so your child does not move and jerk. A common type is a **papoose** system - wrapping a child snugly in a special blanket. This keeps their arms, legs and head still so the dentist can work safely.



The dentist may want to treat your child in a **hospital using general anesthesia** (child is asleep).