

## A lifelong habit that should start early

Taking your child to the dentist regularly is just as important for maintaining their good dental health as brushing and flossing each and every day.

Having your child visit the dentist is a great habit to develop - the earlier, the better. Regular dental visits from an early age (ideally at their first birthday or when their first tooth appears) accustom your child to the dental office environment, making it easier to return.

## How often should my child visit the dentist? How often should they have their teeth cleaned and x-rays taken?

The chart below offers general guidelines for the frequency of such procedures, broken down by age. Your dentist will determine what your child's unique dental needs are and will be able to develop a schedule that works best for them.



	<u>Age 1-5</u>	<u>Age 6-20</u>	<u>Age 21+</u>
<u>Exams</u>	Yearly	Yearly	Yearly
<u>Cleanings</u>	Yearly	Yearly	Yearly
<u>Limited x-rays</u>	As needed	Yearly	Yearly
<u>Full x-rays</u>	As needed	As needed	Every 3yrs

## **What if my child has never had a cavity? Is it still necessary to visit the dentist each year?**

Regular dental visits will help your child maintain a cavity-free mouth and lifelong dental health. Professional teeth cleaning removes built-up debris, while fluoride treatments make teeth stronger and more resistant to cavities. Regular visits also reinforce good brushing and flossing habits for your child. Ask your dentist to determine what your child's needs are, and how often their visits should be scheduled.

### **First visit by first birthday**

The age 1 dental visit lets parents discuss:

- How to care for an infant's or toddler's mouth
- Appropriate use of fluoride for your child
- Oral habits, including finger and thumb sucking
- Teething and developmental milestones
- The relationship between diet and oral health



## **What happens during a regular dental check-up?**

The dentist will review your child's medical and dental history and examine your child's teeth, oral tissue, and jaw. The teeth may be cleaned, polished, and given a fluoride treatment as necessary.