



**Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit**  
[www.smdhu.org/Topics/Dental/Dental-Clinics](http://www.smdhu.org/Topics/Dental/Dental-Clinics)

Grow Up  
**Smiling**

## First dental visit

Visit a dental provider by age one or within six months of seeing your child's first tooth. Regular dental visits support good oral health and overall health.

## Dental clinics

We offer full-service dental clinics for children on publicly funded programs. Clinics are located in Barrie and Gravenhurst.

Please call the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit at 705-721-7520 or toll-free 1-877-721-7520 ext. 8818 for more information.



**Healthy Smiles Ontario**  
*Find out if you are eligible*  
[www.ontario.ca/page/get-dental-care](http://www.ontario.ca/page/get-dental-care)



**Canada Dental Benefit**  
*Find out if you are eligible*  
[www.canada.ca/dental](http://www.canada.ca/dental)

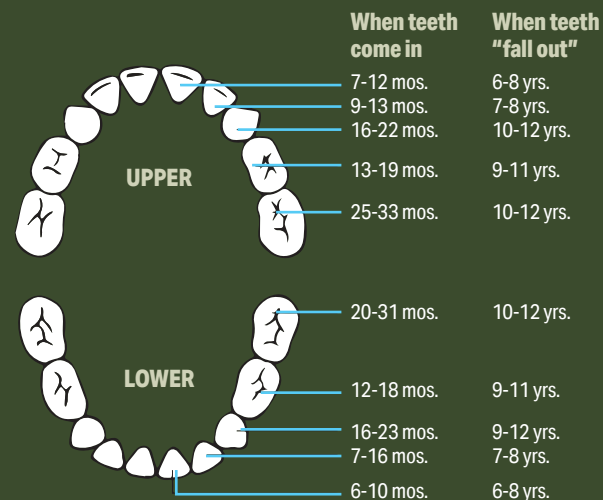


## Baby teeth are important

Baby teeth help your child eat, talk and smile. They also hold space for adult teeth so that they grow into the right position. Developing good habits early help keep teeth healthy.

### Tooth chart

Most children will have 20 baby teeth by the age of three. Baby teeth will start falling out around age six.



## Caring for your child's teeth

### Toothbrushing

Help your child brush their teeth at least two times daily for two minutes with a soft toothbrush, especially before bedtime. Do not forget their gums and tongue. Replace their toothbrush every three to four months or after an illness.

### Toothpaste

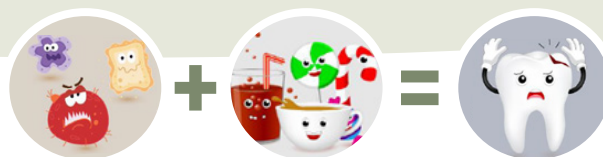
Use fluoridated toothpaste once the first tooth appears. Use an amount the size of a grain of rice. If your child can spit, use a pea-sized amount. Do not swallow. Spit out leftover toothpaste. Do not rinse with water.

### Flossing

Floss your child's teeth daily. Flossing removes plaque and food from between the teeth where a toothbrush cannot reach.

## How do cavities start?

Plaque, a sticky layer made up of bacteria and food, is always forming. When it's left on teeth, bacteria and sugar form an acid. This acid attacks teeth and causes cavities.



**Bacteria**  
*in plaque*

**Sugar**  
*in food and drink*

**Acid**  
*causing cavities*



## Oral health tips

- Once feeding is well established, do not forget to clean your baby's gums using a soft, clean, damp washcloth.
- By age one, use an open cup instead of a bottle or sippy cup. Do not put your child to bed with a bottle. If you do, it is recommended to use water only.
- Do not share food and drinks as you can pass on germs from your mouth that may cause your child to develop cavities.
- Make water your drink of choice. Avoid sugary beverages, including fruit juices and pop.
- Limit snacking. Choose snacks that are healthy, sugar-free and that don't stick to teeth. Healthy foods include cheese, fruit, vegetables, yogurt, milk and eggs. Refer to *Canada's Food Guide* for healthy eating tips. Avoid snacks such as cookies, dried fruit, crackers, fruit snacks and candy.
- Check your child's mouth and teeth regularly, especially at the gumline. If you see white, chalky or brown stains, visit a dental provider or call the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit at 705-721-7520 or toll-free 1-877-721-7520 ext. 8804.

## Services available at the health unit

### Dental screenings

A dental screening is a quick visual look inside the mouth. It is a safe and simple way to identify dental concerns. It does not replace an examination by your dentist. Screenings are FREE and available to all children and youth aged 17 years and under.

## Preventive services

### Fluoride

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral that helps to strengthen and protect teeth against cavities. Most children in Simcoe Muskoka do not have access to fluoridated water and are at greater risk for cavities.

### Dental sealants

Sealants are a tooth-colored coating easily applied on adult molars. They help prevent cavities by creating a smooth, easier to clean surface.

Please call the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit at 705-721-7520 or toll-free 1-877-721-7520 ext. 8804 to book a FREE dental screening to see if your child qualifies for any programs and/or services.