

## Dental Visits

It is important to make regular visits to a dental office. A child should visit a dentist before their 1st birthday and continue every year after. Regular visits with your dentist can reduce your child's fears.

All school-aged children should have a dental "checkup" at least once a year. Finding cavities early and treating them, will save your child from a life of pain.

Dentists can "*paint*" plastic coatings called **sealants** on the biting surfaces of permanent back teeth (molars) to help prevent cavities.

It is a myth that a child can have "soft teeth" because their parents have poor oral health. Every child can have strong healthy teeth by:

- eating well
- brushing and flossing
- visiting their dentist

With the proper care, a child can be "filling free."

## Dental Information

For more information about dental health, or programs for children, contact Lambton Public Health at 519-383-8331 or toll free 1-800-667-1839.



# Your Child's Smile

### LAMBTON PUBLIC HEALTH

160 Exmouth Street,  
Point Edward, ON N7T 7Z6

Phone: 519-383-8331 | 1-800-667-1839

Fax: 519-383-3833

[www.lambtonhealth.on.ca](http://www.lambtonhealth.on.ca)

Revised: 07.Nov.2016

**Baby Teeth,  
Preventing Cavities &  
Dental Visits**



**Lambton  
Public Health**

## Primary "Baby" Teeth

By the time children start school they have 20 primary or "baby" teeth.

Some of these teeth must last until the child is 12 years old.

These teeth are important for:

- speaking
- eating
- holding space for permanent teeth

Primary teeth require proper care and attention, and must be fixed if they decay.

## Watch for New Arrivals

In the early school years, permanent teeth replace primary teeth. Parents may worry that the new teeth appear **large** and **not as white** as primary teeth.

Permanent teeth grow to the size they will be as an adult, and that is why they appear large compared to the rest. They are **not as white** because blood vessels in the pulp of the tooth are still large.

## 6-Year Molars (First permanent molars)

Parents and children always notice new front teeth, but it is important to realize that 6-year molars are the first permanent teeth to show. They are at the back of the mouth, next in line behind the primary molars. Watch for them!

If a primary molar is lost too soon because of decay, the teeth may shift and that can change how permanent teeth bite together - unless fixed by a dentist.

---

**NEVER** put your child to bed with food or drink other than tap water. Sugar in all foods can sit on the surfaces of their teeth all night and cause decay.

---

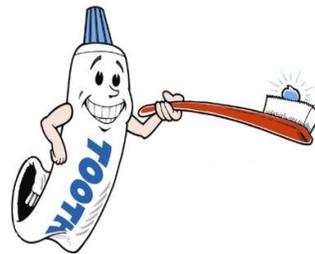
## Preventing Cavities

You can help prevent cavities by:

- brushing and flossing often
- helping them eat healthy
- visiting your dentist at least once a year

## Teeth Cleaning

- ✓ Brush your child's teeth using **FLUORIDE** toothpaste twice (2x) a day for at least 2 minutes each time.



- ✓ Floss between their teeth every day.
- ✓ Use water or **NON-FLUORIDE** toothpaste until the child is 3 years old.

Until your child is 7-8 years old, help them brush their teeth at least once a day, especially just before bed. By 9-10 years old, they should be able to floss and brush on their own.

Parents can be a positive role model and offer support.

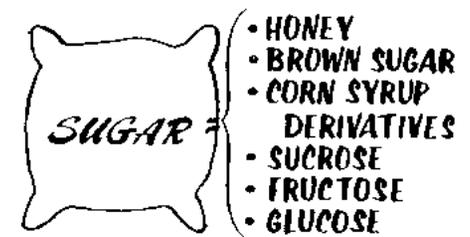
## Snacks

The link between a good diet and dental health is important.

Sugar feeds the germs that cause tooth decay and destroys the enamel. Without the protection of enamel, cavities can form.

It is not just how much sugar is eaten but:

- how sticky
- how often
- when it is eaten



Sugar eaten between meals does more damage because it not washed away by the other foods you eat.