

**For more information,
visit these websites:**

Dental Care for Your Baby
<http://www.aapd.org/publications/brochures/babycare.asp>

Oral Health Resources
<http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/>



“Tips for Terrific Teeth - A Guide for Parents” was written by
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TIPS FOR TERRIFIC TEETH



A Guide for Parents

 **AgriLIFE EXTENSION**
Texas A&M System

TIPS FOR TERRIFIC TEETH!

1 START CLEANING TEETH EARLY



Start cleaning your baby's gums at birth with a soft infant toothbrush and water or with a clean, damp cloth.



Start using toothpaste with fluoride when your child is 2 years old.



Take your child to a dentist when the first tooth comes in, usually between 6 and 12 months of age.



Use toothpaste with fluoride before the age of 2 if your child's doctor or dentist recommends it.

2 PREVENT TOOTH DECAY



Encourage your child to drink from a cup around his or her 1st birthday.



Children should not fall asleep with a bottle.



Drinking juice from a bottle should be avoided — it should be in a cup or, better yet, give them water!

3 USE THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF FLUORIDE TOOTHPASTE



Use only a small amount of toothpaste (about the size of a pea).



While fluoride is important for fighting cavities, don't allow your child to swallow the toothpaste. Too much fluoride may cause white spots on his or her teeth.



Teach your child to spit out the toothpaste and rinse well after brushing.

4 SUPERVISE BRUSHING



Brush your child's teeth twice a day until your child can handle the toothbrush alone.



Watch your child's brushing to make sure the child is doing a good job and using only a small amount of toothpaste.

5 TALK TO YOUR CHILD'S DOCTOR OR DENTIST



Ask the doctor or dentist about your child's specific fluoride needs. Children older than 6 months may need extra fluoride if your drinking water does not have enough.



Children younger than 6 years old should not use a fluoride mouth rinse unless it is recommended by a doctor a dentist.



After age 2, most children get the right amount of fluoride to help prevent cavities if they drink water that contains fluoride and brush their teeth with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste twice a day.