



How to take care of your child's teeth.

The following information shows when your child's primary teeth (also called baby teeth or deciduous teeth) should erupt and shed. Eruption times vary from child to child.

As seen below, the first teeth begin to break through the gums at about age 6 months. Commonly, the two bottom central incisors are the first two teeth to erupt (the two bottom front teeth). The emerging of the top four front teeth goes next. Then, other teeth slowly begin to fill in until all 20 teeth (10 in each of the upper and lower jaw) have come in by the time the child is 2 ½ to 3 years old. The complete set of primary teeth is in the [mouth](#) from the age of 3 to 7 years of age.

Primary Teeth Development Chart		
Upper Teeth	When tooth emerges	When tooth falls out
Central incisor	8 to 12 months	6 to 7 years
Lateral incisor	9 to 13 months	7 to 8 years
Canine (cuspid)	16 to 22 months	10 to 12 years
First molar	13 to 19 months	9 to 11 years
Second molar	25 to 33 months	10 to 12 years
Lower Teeth		
Second molar	23 to 31 months	10 to 12 years
First molar	14 to 18 months	9 to 11 years
Canine (cuspid)	17 to 23 months	9 to 12 years
Lateral incisor	10 to 16 months	7 to 8 years
Central incisor	6 to 10 months	6 to 7 years

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Other primary [tooth](#) eruption facts:

- A general rule of thumb is that for every 6 months of life, approx. 4 teeth will erupt.
- Girls generally precede boys in tooth eruption.
- Lower teeth usually erupt first before the upper teeth.
- Teeth in both upper and lower jaws usually erupt in pairs -- one on the right and one on the left.
- Primary teeth are smaller in size and whiter in colour in comparison with the permanent teeth that will follow.
- By the time a child is aged 2 to 3, the primary teeth should be visible and are already erupted.

Shortly after age 4, the jaw and facial bones of the child begin to grow, thus, creating spaces between the primary teeth. This is a perfectly natural growth process that provides the necessary space for the larger permanent teeth to emerge. Between the ages of 6 and 12, a mixture of both primary teeth and permanent teeth is now apparent in the mouth.

Why it is Important to Care for Baby Teeth.

While it's correct that baby teeth are only in the mouth a short period of time, they play an important role.

Baby teeth:

- Provides and reserves space for their permanent counterparts.
- Gives the face its normal appearance.
- Aid in the development of clear speech.
- Help attain good nutrition (missing or decayed teeth make it difficult to chew, causing children to reject foods)
- Helps in giving a healthy start to the permanent teeth (for decay and infection in baby teeth might cause damage to the permanent teeth developing beneath them)

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Our mailing address is:

info@americanheartsaver.com

