



Gerstenmaier

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

from day one



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Is Your Child at Risk for Early Tooth Decay?

Did you know that tooth decay is one of the most common chronic childhood diseases? Even though your child's baby teeth will inevitably fall out, they're still susceptible to cavities, and vitally important as placeholders that will ensure that permanent teeth come in correctly. Children of all ages need strong, healthy teeth to adequately chew their food and maintain an attractive smile.

Many factors can cause early tooth decay, but the most common are frequent exposure to sugary liquids or the prolonged use of a bottle, sippy cup, or pacifier. In addition to avoiding too many sweet drinks and dependence on a pacifier, we also recommend that mothers avoid putting the baby's feeding spoon in their mouth or cleaning the pacifier with their own saliva as cavity-causing bacteria can be passed to the infant. If early tooth decay sets in and is untreated, it can cause infections that might require tooth extractions.

Tips to Prevent "Baby Bottle Tooth Decay" from the ADA:

- After your child's first teeth emerge, gently brush them with a child-size toothbrush and small smear of fluoride toothpaste until age 3
- From ages 3 to 6, use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste
- Supervise brushing to ensure that the toothpaste is not swallowed
- Use only formula, milk, or breast milk in bottles and not sugar water or juice
- Bedtime and naptime bottles should be finished before settling in for sleep



Congratulations to GPD's No Cavity Club Winner for March - Victor!

Preventing early tooth decay will keep your child smiling well into adulthood! The best time to start a lifetime of good oral hygiene is to have your child visit us shortly after the first tooth appears and to begin scheduling routine visits by the age of two.



Helping Kids to Floss

Flossing is an essential part of proper dental care that is as important for children as it is for adults. Without your informed assistance and caring insistence, it's unlikely that it will become a habit. Flossing requires a little more skill than brushing, so you may want to consult us first to ensure that your child has all the right tools and information to properly care for their teeth. By the time your child is seven or eight, they should be old enough to begin learning to floss with string.



Don't forget to pick up Our Story and a Welcome Brochure!

Helping Your Child to Floss:

- Use enough string floss that you're able to comfortably wrap several inches from each side around the middle fingers.
- Run the floss gently between teeth while using the thumb and index fingers to keep the floss taut.
- Use care to not snap the string into the gums.
- Curve the floss around each tooth and move it up and down along the sides.
- Unravel fresh string as you move between each tooth.



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It's not uncommon to see slight bleeding along the gums when your child starts, but if the bleeding continues, be sure to call and see us.

Losing Baby Teeth

As soon a child learns about the tooth fairy, the scary thought of losing a tooth becomes an exciting one. It's also a great time for children and parents to talk about taking care of their teeth!

Children have twenty baby teeth that usually come in by the age of three. All of them will eventually fall out and they usually do so in the order by which they emerged. They begin to loosen when the permanent teeth below start to push up, with the lower central

teeth generally falling out around ages five to six. Most children will have lost all of their baby teeth around twelve or thirteen when their twelve-year molars start to come in. If your child loses more than one tooth before the ages of four or five, however, be sure to contact us to make sure there is no other issue that might be forcing them out prematurely.

If your child is excited or anxious about a tooth that's loose, you may encourage him or her to gently wiggle it, but remind your child that he or she must not pull it out, as that can lead to infection or spacing issues for the tooth pushing up from below. You can always tell them to leave it alone as most will fall out on their own!

When your child's new teeth emerge, it's critical that you establish good brushing and flossing routines and schedules routine visits to our office. Making the transition from baby teeth to permanent teeth is an exciting milestone on the journey of good oral hygiene that will last a lifetime!

About Our Practice

Gerstenmaier Pediatric Dentistry is a family owned practice located in Akron, Ohio. From day one, we have provided children, adolescents, families and adults with special needs with the right care at the right time -- ensuring positive dental experiences that last a lifetime and bring bright and happy smiles to every patient.