



Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

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To order additional copies of this publication, or if you have questions about the content, please call: the Oral Health Program at 207-287-3121, TTY users call Maine relay 711.

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Taking Care of Your Child's Mouth

For Parents of Children Ages 3-5



A lifetime of smiles begins early.



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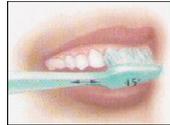
Baby teeth are important.



Most likely, by the age of 3, all your child's baby teeth will have come in. Help your child brush these teeth every day. Children can not do a good job alone until around age 9.

How to brush and floss.

Use a soft, child-sized toothbrush. A small pea-sized dab of fluoride toothpaste is plenty.



Hold the toothbrush with the bristles pointed up towards the gum line.



Use short back and forth strokes.



Brush the inside, outside, back and front of each tooth.

Brush the tongue.



Floss the teeth. Your dentist can show you how.

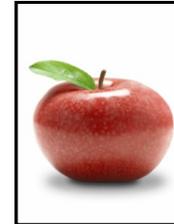
Fluoride:



Fluoride is important to prevent cavities and make teeth stronger. Ask your doctor or dentist about this.

Low sugar snacks and drinks.

Sweet, sugary foods and drinks are not good for teeth. Limit sweet treats such as candy, cake, cookies, ice cream and soda.



Regular dental checkups.

When your child turns 3, it's time to take him, or her, to the dentist. Regular check-ups are important.



You and the dentist both care for your child's baby teeth. Then the adult (permanent) teeth will grow in healthy and strong.