



Helping Hands

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9-13 YEARS OLD

MIXED DENTITION

Your child will begin to lose their primary (baby) canines and molars at this age. Again, there is a wide range in which this process begins to occur. Around the time of the loss of the last primary molar, the permanent twelve year molars will erupt behind the permanent first molars.

CARE

Your child now has the ability to take care of his or her own teeth. However, reminders and adult supervision are still important. Flossing with either dental floss or hand held flossers should be done daily. Your child should be using a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste on their toothbrush twice a day when brushing and brush for two minutes each time. The excess toothpaste should simply be spit out of the mouth and not rinsed with water, as this can decrease its protective benefit.

DIET

Your child should be eating three meals a day and two snacks (if desired), with any beverages other than water being limited to these times. Children who play sports should limit their intake of sports drinks and choose to drink water. The frequency of carbohydrate exposure is more strongly linked to the progression of dental decay at this time than the type of carbohydrates. These periods of time in between meals and snacks will allow your child's body to do its share in cavity prevention by allowing the saliva to rinse away the carbohydrates and equalize the acid levels in the mouth to a healthy environment. Some healthy snack options include: Cheeses, nuts, fresh fruits and vegetables, raisins, popcorn, solid chocolates, ice cream, and yogurt. Try to steer clear of crackers, dried fruits, gummy fruit snacks, sticky candy and mints, sugar gum, suckers, sodas and sports drinks.

SEALANTS

Dental sealants will be recommended once the second permanent molars have fully erupted. Sealants help protect the deep grooves of the back permanent teeth from sugars, plaque and acid. Having sealants is a simple procedure that does not require any use of local anesthesia.

INJURY PREVENTION

We recommend discussing the appropriate mouthguard, and its use, with your pediatric dentist. Your child should use a mouthguard on a regular basis when participating in athletic activities to help prevent traumatic injuries to their permanent teeth, lips, face and jaws.