

1. HABITS & PREVENTION

? At what age should my child stop thumb-sucking or using a pacifier to prevent crooked teeth?

Most children stop naturally between ages 2 and 4. Habits continuing past age 4 can affect jaw development and tooth alignment (leading to issues like an overbite), so intervention is recommended before then.

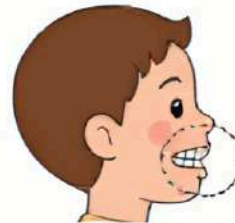
Ages 2-4

most children stop naturally



Past age 4

habits can affect jaw development and tooth alignment



overbite

? What are dental sealants and does your child need them?

Dental sealants are protective coatings applied to the deep grooves of back teeth to prevent food trapping and decay. They are usually recommended when permanent molars erupt (~ age 6).

Before

food trapping in deep groove



After

smooth sealed groove



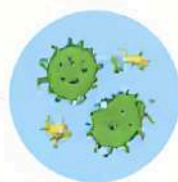
Around age 6

? Are sticky gummy vitamins or fruit juices really bad for their teeth?

Yes, sticky gummy vitamins or sugar juices cling to teeth for a long time. Bacteria feed on them to produce acid, significantly increasing the risk of tooth decay.



sticky sugar



bacteria



acid



higher risk of tooth decay

2. ORTHODONTICS & DEVELOPMENT

? Will my child need braces, and when should they have their first orthodontic evaluation?

The AAO recommends an initial orthodontic evaluation by age 7. At this stage, jaw growth can be monitored, and developmental issues can be spotted early.



Check early, grow healthy!



? There are large gaps between my toddler's baby teeth. Is that a problem?

Gaps between baby teeth are actually normal and desirable. They create necessary spacing for the larger permanent teeth that will eventually replace them.

Baby teeth (spaced)



Permanent teeth (larger)



REMEMBER



Brush early and twice daily.



Use the right amount of fluoride toothpaste.



Protect baby teeth.



Ask your dentist when unsure.



Information provided by Bayside Dental