

Family Oral Care Checklist

Daily habits, kids' milestones and warning signs that keep the whole family cavity-free.

DAILY ROUTINE

- ☐ Brush **twice a day for two minutes** with fluoride toothpaste
- ☐ Floss or use interdental brushes **once a day**, ideally before bed
- ☐ Spit, don't rinse, after brushing so the fluoride keeps working
- ☐ Replace toothbrushes every 3 months and after any illness
- ☐ Brush your tongue — it harbors most bad-breath bacteria

KIDS & TEENS

- ☐ Start brushing at the **first tooth** — a rice-grain smear of fluoride paste
- ☐ Book the first dental visit by **age 1**, or within 6 months of the first tooth
- ☐ Supervise brushing until about age 7–8 — kids miss the back teeth
- ☐ Ask about **sealants** when permanent molars come in (around age 6)
- ☐ Get an orthodontic check by age 7 — catching it early costs less

FOOD & DRINK HABITS

- ☐ Keep sugary snacks and sodas to **mealtimes only** — grazing feeds decay
- ☐ Swap juice and sports drinks for water between meals
- ☐ Never put a baby to bed with a bottle of milk or juice
- ☐ Chew sugar-free gum after meals when you can't brush

WARNING SIGNS TO ACT ON

- ☐ A **twinge with hot, cold or sweets** — often the first sign of decay
- ☐ Gums that bleed when you brush or floss
- ☐ Bad breath that brushing doesn't fix
- ☐ White or **dark spots** on any tooth surface
- ☐ Morning jaw pain or headaches — a sign of nighttime grinding

CHECKUPS & PREVENTION

- ☐ See the dentist for an **exam and cleaning every 6 months**
- ☐ Tell your dentist about new medications — many cause dry mouth
- ☐ Wear a **custom mouthguard** for contact sports
- ☐ Ask about a night guard if you clench or grind your teeth

EMERGENCY BASICS

- ☐ Save your dentist's **emergency number** in your phone now
- ☐ Knocked-out tooth: hold it by the crown, store in milk, go immediately
- ☐ A lost filling or crown can wait a day or two — but book right away
- ☐ Facial swelling with fever means **call immediately** — don't wait it out

Knocked-out adult tooth? Don't scrub the root — rinse gently, store the tooth in milk and get to a dentist within 30–60 minutes. Speed decides whether it can be saved.