Tips for Good Dental Health

- Keep all scheduled dental appointments
- Call your dentist 24 to 48 hours prior to the appointment if you must cancel
- Provide child caregivers with the dentist’s name and emergency phone number and be sure they know how to handle dental emergencies, for example severe tooth pain, severe bleeding, swelling or trauma (accidents).

At 12 months of age:
- Begin brushing your toddler’s teeth with a smear-sized dab of fluoride toothpaste, (no larger than a grain of rice), Make an appointment for your child’s first dental exam as soon as your child’s first tooth erupts and no later than their first birthday
- Do not put the child to bed with a bottle that contains anything but water, or prop a bottle in the child’s mouth

At 15 and 18 months of age:
- Continue brushing your toddler’s teeth with a smear-sized dab of fluoride toothpaste, (no larger than a grain of rice), Make an appointment with your dentists for an examination if you have not done so already
- Continue to avoid putting your child to bed with a bottle that contains anything but water, or prop a bottle in the child’s mouth
- Children under 4 to 5 years old will still need help to brush

At 3 years of age
- Begin teaching your child how to brush their own teeth with a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste and with help from you
- Children under 4 to 5 years old will still need help to brush
- Begin flossing when back teeth begin to come in. This is important because toothbrush bristles cannot reach between teeth, leaving those teeth vulnerable to bacteria and decay.
- Take your child to the dentist regularly and ask about fluoride supplements, or in office fluoride applications, which make the tooth enamel strong and help to protect it from decay. For most children, that means visiting the dentist twice a year

At 4 years of age
- Be sure your child brushes their teeth 2 times a day with a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste – with supervision
- Children under 4 to 5 years old will still need help to brush
If your child regularly sucks a pacifier or fingers or thumb, begin to help the child stop the habit

Throughout middle childhood

Be sure your child brushes their teeth 2 times a day with a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste – with supervision until your child is 6 years old, and help your child floss their teeth. Ensure that you child gets regular checkups and be sure to ask your dentist about supplemental fluoride and sealants, once your child’s adult molars (6 year molars) begin to come in. As your child’s adult teeth come in, have your dentist evaluate these to be sure they are coming in properly. Finally, be sure your child eats well and gets plenty of fruits and vegetables.