

## The health care team wants to keep your child's mouth healthy.

Cavities can be painful. Children who have cavities in their baby teeth are more likely to have cavities in their adult teeth.

## Tell your dental or medical professional if your child is having any of the following issues:

- Tooth pain
- Broken or chipped teeth
- Discolored teeth
- Swollen gums
- Bleeding gums
- Difficulty with chewing or speaking

## After a fluoride varnish treatment:

- Eat a soft diet for the rest of the day.
- Wait until the next day to brush your child's teeth.
- Your child's teeth may look yellow until the varnish is brushed off.



# Dental Health Resources

North Carolina Oral Health Section  
<https://publichealth.nc.gov/oralhealth>

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**ToothTalk**  
[www.toothtalk.org](http://www.toothtalk.org)

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**American Dental Association**  
[www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)

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**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
[www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/childrens-oral-health](http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/childrens-oral-health)

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**National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center**  
[www.mchoralhealth.org](http://www.mchoralhealth.org)



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**



NC Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health • Oral Health Section  
<https://publichealth.nc.gov/oralhealth>

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# YOUR CHILD CAN KEEP THAT *Healthy Smile!*





## Dental Check and Fluoride Varnish

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. When should I take my child to the dentist for the first time?

Your child should have their first dental appointment by age 1 or at the appearance of the first tooth. Establishing a dental home early can help prevent cavities that can lead to pain and other medical issues.

#### 2. What happens during a dental check?

During your child's appointment, a medical or dental professional will look in your child's mouth to make sure everything is healthy or normal, even before they have teeth! The provider will check for healthy gums, teeth, and bone, share tips about how to take care of your child's teeth and paint fluoride varnish on your child's teeth.

#### 3. What is fluoride varnish?

Fluoride varnish is a safe, painless temporary protective coating that is painted on your child's teeth by medical and dental professionals and works by making teeth stronger. It is ok if your child has fluoride varnish painted on their teeth during medical and dental visits. Medicaid will reimburse each provider separately.

## WHY ARE BABY TEETH IMPORTANT?

Children need baby teeth for eating, speaking and growing. Baby teeth also hold space for the adult teeth to grow into. Taking care of your child's baby teeth is important for a lifetime of healthy smiles.



#### Healthcare providers partner on your child's health care because they can:

- Check for any problems, such as cavities.
- Address any concerns or questions you may have about your child's dental health.
- Provide preventive dental care like a dental check and fluoride varnish.
- Work together with you to achieve the best oral health and overall health for your child.

#### Your child's healthcare providers need the following information:

- General health
- Family dental history
- Feeding practices
- Oral hygiene practices
- Oral habits

#### Feeding practices for healthy smiles:

- Limit sugary foods and drinks.
- Don't put your child to bed with a bottle.
- Wean to a drinking cup by one year of age.

#### Oral hygiene at home:

- Brush your child's teeth twice a day.
- Use the right amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Don't rinse your child's teeth after brushing.

### Kids Toothpaste Tip



Adapted from an American Dental Association (ADA) graphic.

Need more information about nutrition?  
Checkout WIC at [www.nutritionnc.com](http://www.nutritionnc.com)

