

# Dental Hygiene for Children

The twenty **primary** or **milk teeth** start to form in the first trimester of pregnancy. Quite a few parents tend to **neglect** oral and dental hygiene in their children until after the first **tooth** appears.

**S**tudies have shown that **pre-mature** loss of a primary tooth can not only effect the position of the following permanent tooth, but may also cause the need for **braces** at some time in the future, and have a negative effect on **swallowing and speech habits**. It has been **proven** that fluoride helps prevent caries and the resultant loss of teeth in children. This is why it is **advisable** to use fluoridised toothpaste with a concentration of between 0.05 per cent and 0.15 per cent, depending on the age of the child. In cases where the risk of developing caries is increased, the dentist may decide to apply a special fluoride **solution** to **seal** the **surface** of the teeth thereby protecting them from corrosion.

**Pharmacy customer: Hello.**  
PTA: Hello.

**I have a prescription here for fluoride tablets for my daughter.**  
Just a moment, I think we have them in the storage area. (After a few moments...)Yes, here you are. Fluoride tablets with vitamin D as a prophylaxis for **rickets**. Will that be all?

**Do you have fluoridised toothpaste?**  
Yes, we certainly do. Is it also for your daughter?

**Yes, it is. Why?**  
You see, although fluoridised toothpaste is very good at protecting the **dental enamel**, there's always a danger of it being much of a good thing. Is your daughter a schoolchild?

**No, she's still in kindergarten. She's only five and a half.**  
Okay. What I meant with "too much of a good thing" was that if you give your daughter these tablets and let her use a fluoridised toothpaste at the same time, there is a very high risk of over-dosing with fluoride.

**Over-dosing! Oh my goodness!**  
Don't worry! But it is a good idea to get your daughter checked regularly for **a lack of** or **an excess of** fluoride. Although an excess of fluoride is really seldom, fluorine in combination with calcium is responsible for healthy bones and teeth.

**Really? I sort of knew that but it's been a long time since I had chemistry at school!**  
It's essential to find a healthy balance.

Too much fluoride can actually have a negative effect on teeth and bones. But it takes years of **high dosage** to cause this. And here in Germany, the fluoride level in our drinking water is well below the critical amount.

**Well, that's good to know.**  
This is a fluoride-free toothpaste that your daughter can use while she's taking the tablets. And here's our hotline number, if you have any questions. It's free of charge from your landline. You can find our opening hours and 24-hour service schedule at our website.

**Really up-to-date. Thank you, that's a great idea.**  
Before I forget: you can also help your daughter by making sure that she has good dental habits. You know, things like reducing the intake of sweets, that type of thing.

**Yes, she does have a sweet-tooth. Although she likes to eat apples and pears, she loves lollipops and chewing gum.**  
Whatever about the lollipops, we have special dental care chewing gum here that's ideal for the times when she can't brush her teeth during the day. Chewing gum actually stimulates the **flow of saliva**, which neutralises the harmful **acids** that damage the enamel.

**I'll take that, too. Thank you for your help. Bye!**  
You're welcome. Goodbye. ■

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## VOCABULARY

dental hygiene	Zahnhygiene
primary/milk teeth	Milchzähne
neglect	versäumen
tooth	Zahn
premature	frühzeitig
braces	Zahnspangen
swallowing and speech habits	Schluck- und Sprechgewohnheiten
proven	bewiesen
advisable	ratsam
solution	Lösung
seal	versiegeln
surface	Oberfläche
prescription	(Arzt)Rezept
rickets	Rachitis
(dental) enamel	Zahnschmelz
a lack of	ein Mangel an
an excess of	ein Überschuss
high dosage	hohe Dosierung
a sweet-tooth	ein Schleckermaul (sein)
chewing gum	Kaugummi
flow of saliva	Speichelfluss
acids	Säuren