

The first visit to the dentist should be by your child's first birthday or when the first tooth appears.



Head, Hand, Heart

**CALL FIRST 5 SAN DIEGO FOR
A GOOD START**

First 5 San Diego is the region's primary organization for promoting the health and well-being of children during the most critical years of development - the first five years of life. Our vision is that all children ages 0 through 5 are healthy, are loved and nurtured, and enter school as active learners.



1-888-5FIRST5
1-888-534-7785

FIRST5SANDIEGO.ORG

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Oral Health

Starts at Birth



First 5 San Diego's Oral Health Initiative

First 5 San Diego's Oral Health Initiative partners with quality community agencies to provide dental checkups, treatment and referrals for children up to 5 years of age and pregnant women. A healthy mouth, including teeth and gums, is essential to the overall health of infants, children and adults.

Dental disease can cause serious and expensive problems for children if left untreated. These include pain, infections, difficulty eating and tooth loss. Children with dental disease may also have trouble sleeping, talking, concentrating and may even miss school.

Good dental health is important for pregnant women too, as the bacteria from the mother's tooth decay can affect the health of her unborn child.

To access dental services provided by First 5 San Diego call 1-888-5 FIRST 5 (1-888-534-7785).

COMMUNITY WATER FLUORIDATION

Many areas of San Diego County have fluoridated water. Drinking fluoridated tap water is a safe and effective way to reduce cavities, especially among children.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Start brushing your child's teeth twice a day as soon as the first tooth appears. Use a smear or rice-size amount of fluoridated toothpaste.
- Ask your child's dentist or pediatrician about putting fluoride varnish on your child's teeth. This is another great way to protect your child's teeth from cavities.
- Adults can spread the germs that cause cavities. Do not put anything in your child's mouth if it has been in your mouth (such as putting your baby's pacifier in your mouth or sharing cups, toothbrushes, spoons, etc.).
- Give your child healthy snacks like fresh fruits, vegetables, cheese and yogurt. Avoid sweet or starchy foods that can cause cavities.
- Give your child water between meals instead of sugary drinks.
- Take your baby to the dentist for a checkup by his or her first birthday or when the first tooth erupts.
- Remember, an adult needs to help children brush until around age 7.

TIPS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

- Brush teeth twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste. Floss and rinse with fluoridated mouthwash daily.
- Visit the dentist early in your pregnancy. Dental care is safe during pregnancy and it is essential for the health of your baby.
- For snacks, choose fruits, vegetables and dairy products over sweet and starchy foods.
- Drink water or low-fat milk instead of carbonated sodas and sweetened fruit juices.

