

WHAT ARE THE OTHER COMMON DENTAL PROBLEMS?

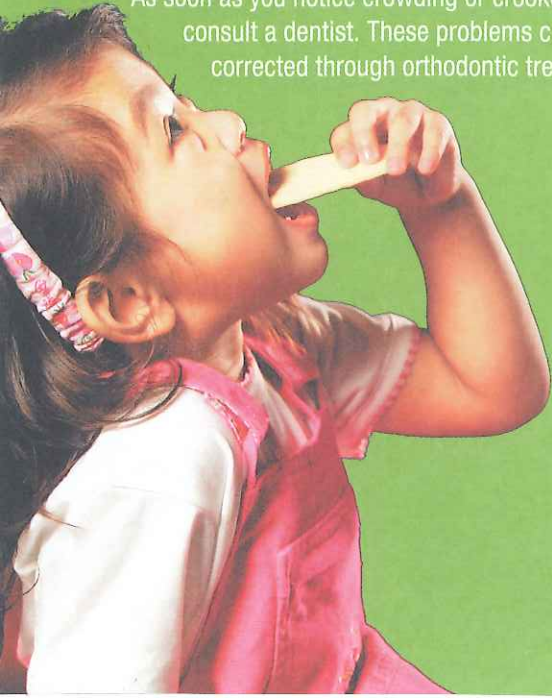
INJURY

Teeth can be fractured, displaced or knocked out due to accidents. Occasionally, teeth may remain intact but are painful when biting or will discolour with time. When an injury occurs, bring your child to the dentist immediately. If a tooth is completely knocked out, place it in milk or saliva and bring it with you to the dentist.

CROOKED TEETH

Prolonged thumb or finger sucking, prolonged use of pacifier, mouth-breathing or genetics are common causes of crooked teeth. Usually, crowding of teeth occurs around 9 to 10 years of age. It is normal for gaps to be present between the primary front teeth.

As soon as you notice crowding or crooked teeth, consult a dentist. These problems can be corrected through orthodontic treatment.



LESS COMMON PROBLEMS INCLUDE:

NATAL AND NEONATAL TEETH

Should you see teeth in your baby's mouth within one month of birth, consult a dentist. These may be shaky, cause discomfort during breastfeeding or can be dangerous if aspirated.

EXTRA TEETH (SUPERNUMERARIES)

Extra teeth may interfere with normal tooth eruption and cause other dental problems.

STAINED TEETH

Stains on teeth may be white, gray and yellow to brown or black. Some common causes include the ingestion of too much fluoride, long-term medication (e.g. tetracycline), bacteria and the death or injury of the tooth from trauma.

WHAT'S THE CORRECT METHOD TO BRUSH TEETH?

Generally, the correct technique utilises a gentle up-and-down motion on all tooth surfaces. A thorough job should take about 2 to 3 minutes which is about the duration of a song.

For toddlers, a wet toothbrush is sufficient to clean their teeth. Children aged 2 to 3 years can use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste on a small, soft-bristled toothbrush. If your child knows not to swallow, use fluoridated toothpaste as this prevents tooth decay.



NHG Polyclinics KIDS!



Are your children taking care of their smiles?

YOUR CHILD'S
DENTAL HEALTH

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S TEETH

A child's primary teeth usually start to grow at about 6 months of age, beginning with the lower and upper front teeth (incisors). The complete set of teeth will develop by age 3. During this teething period, the child may experience drooling, gum swelling and tender gums. Analgesic gels can be used to relieve discomfort.

At around 6 years of age, a child will start to shed the primary teeth to allow for permanent teeth. The permanent molars appear first, followed by the lower and upper incisors. By 12 years of age, the complete set of permanent teeth, with the exception of the wisdom teeth (third molars), will have developed.

HOW CAN MY CHILD AVOID TOOTH DECAY?

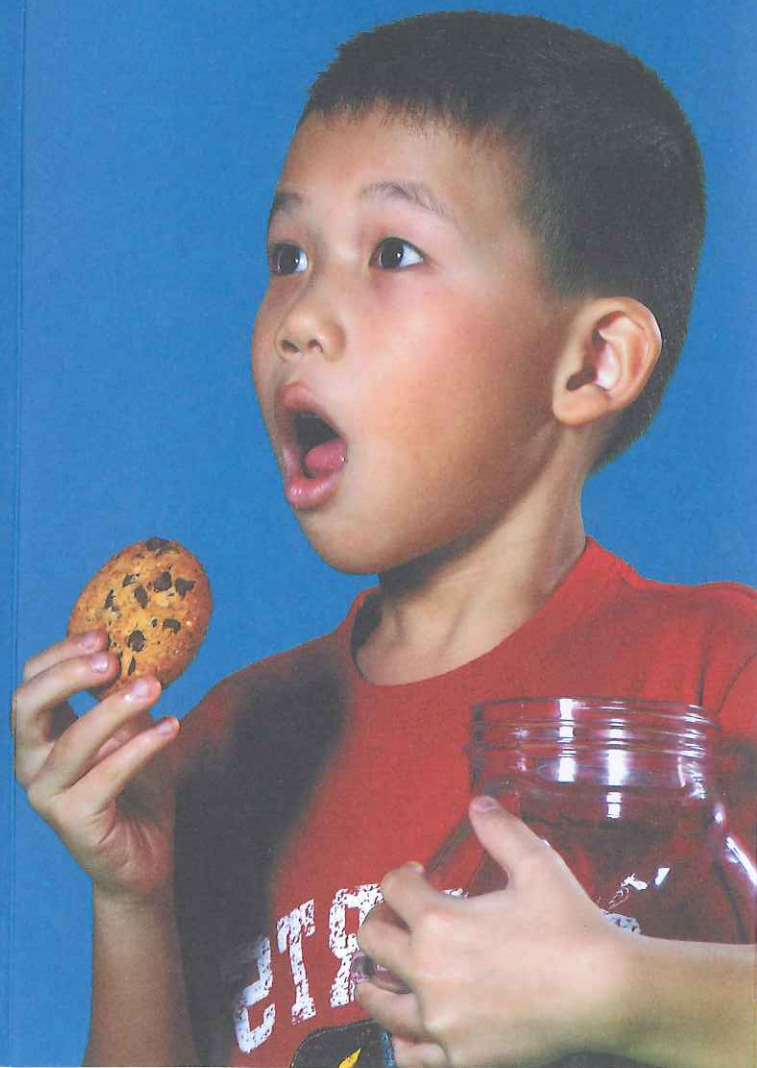
Also known as caries, tooth decay can become serious if left undetected.

DO:

- Wean your child off breastfeeding as soon as they are able to feed from a cup or straw.
- Encourage regular and correct tooth brushing from 12 months of age.
- Clean your baby's teeth with a moist washcloth after breastfeeding, especially before bedtime.
- Encourage older children to floss their teeth and brush with fluoridated toothpaste.
- Bring your child for regular dental checkups so that early tooth decay can be detected and curbed. The first visit should take place when the first tooth comes in.

DO NOT:

- Allow your child to eat too much sweet and sticky food.
- Let your child fall asleep while drinking from the milk bottle. Remove the milk bottle as soon as they finish feeding. If possible, clean their teeth before they sleep.



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