

Oral Health for Our Youngest Patients

Derived from the AAP's policy statement: 'Oral Health Risk Assessment Timing and Establishment of the Dental Home', May 2003.



Every child should begin to receive oral health risk assessments by 6 months of age from a pediatrician or a qualified pediatric health care professional.



Referring a child for an oral health examination by a dentist who provides care for infants and young children 6 months after the first tooth erupts or by 12 months of age establishes the child's dental home and provides an opportunity to implement preventive dental health habits that meet each child's unique needs and keep the child free from dental or oral disease.



Pediatricians, family practitioners, pediatric nurse practitioners and physician assistants should be trained to perform an oral health risk assessment on all children beginning by 6 months of age to identify known risk factors for early childhood dental caries.



Infants identified as having significant risk of dental caries should be entered into an aggressive anticipatory guidance and intervention program provided by a dentist between 6 and 12 months of age.

