



---

## Healthy Smiles in Any Home

# Who We Are

*Managed Health Services (MHS) is a managed care entity that has been proudly serving the state of Indiana for 30 years through the Hoosier Healthwise and Hoosier Care Connect Medicaid programs and the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP) Medicaid alternative program. MHS also offers Ambetter Health in the Indiana health insurance marketplace, and Wellcare By Allwell, a Medicare Advantage plan. All of our plans include quality, comprehensive coverage with a provider network you can trust.*

Dr. David Austin, MHS Dental Director

Elizabeth Sons, Manager, Community Engagement



# Start With the Facts



# Oral Health Milestones




# Dental Disease Facts

- **Common Occurrence:** Early childhood caries are the most common chronic childhood disease in the U.S. – five times more common than asthma.
- **Health Effects:** Untreated tooth decay can lead to infections and pain, inhibiting a child's ability to eat, sleep, speak, play and learn.
- **Correlation to Chronic Disease:** Oral health disease is often accompanied by other chronic childhood comorbidities such as diabetes, heart disease, and food insecurity/malnutrition.
- **Prevalence:** 23% of children aged 2-5, and 52% of children aged 6-8 have cavities in their primary teeth, with over 10% of that decay going untreated. In permanent teeth, 17% of children aged 6-11 had cavities, with a 57% prevalence in ages 12-19.
- **School Impact:** Students miss an average of more than 34 million school hours each year because of acute/unplanned dental care.

# Oral Health Impacting Communities

(CDC 2024)

Approximately 57 million Americans live in a dental health professional shortage area, with over half being rural, according to the CDC as of 2024.



Untreated cavities were nearly three times as common for children of lower income ages 6-9, and nearly twice as common for adolescents aged 12-19.



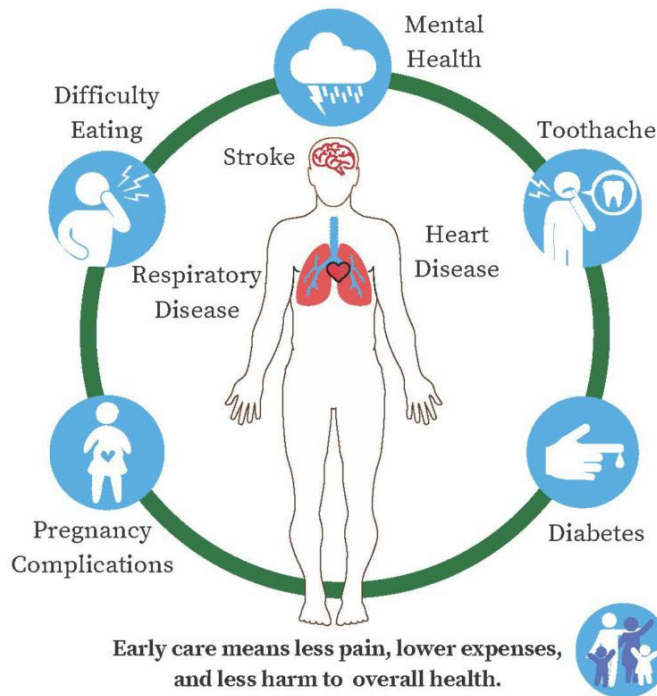
7 in 10 Mexican American children (70%) age 6 to 9 years have cavities in primary (baby) or permanent teeth compared with 4 in 10 non-Hispanic White children (43%).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2025). Health Disparities in Oral Health. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/oral-health/health-equity/>

# Putting the Mouth Back in the Body



Oral Health Can Impact Your Body and Mind



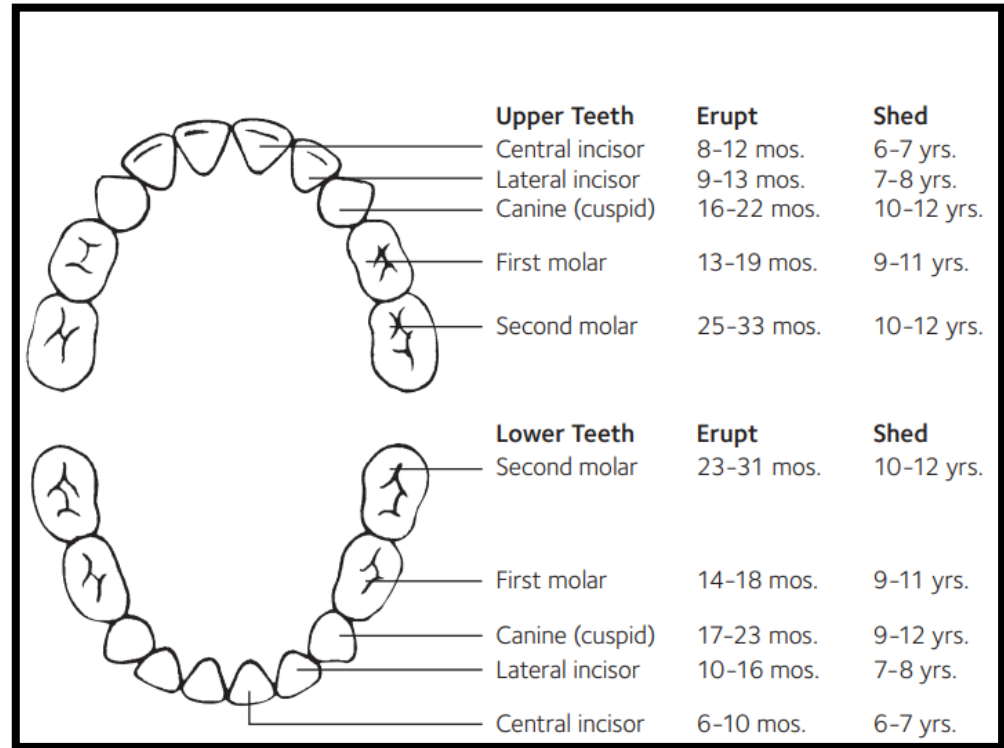
- Oral health plays a key role in overall health, from pregnancy complications, to chronic diseases like diabetes, to heart disease and digestive health, and mental health.
- Hormones produced by stress and depression can contribute to gum disease.
- Mental health conditions such as depression can lead to a lack of oral hygiene habits and a decrease in accessing dental care.
- Healthy smiles greatly affect a student's self view and their social emotional wellness.

# Taking Action



# Baby's First Teeth

- Even before baby's first tooth breaks through, gently wipe the gums with a damp cloth or gauze pad after feedings.
- Even though babies are born with all 20 primary teeth in their jaw, their first tooth will start to break through around 6 months of age, with all teeth coming in by around age 3.
- As soon as teeth appear, gently brush twice daily with a small, soft-bristled toothbrush and grain of rice sized fluoride toothpaste.
- Once baby has 2 teeth that touch, use a strand of floss to clean in between.



# Young Children's Oral Care

Between ages 3-6 is the best time to teach young children how to brush and floss.

- Ensure they reach all teeth.
- Brush twice a day for at least 2 minutes (best morning and evening).
- Use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Special picks or pre-threaded floss may be easier for little hands.

Make sure your child drinks plenty of water.

- Fluoride in the water found in most communities helps prevent against tooth decay.

Watch child's diet carefully.

Bacteria that often causes cavities feeds on sugary foods and drinks, including fruit juice and cereal bars.

# For Toddlers – Early Elementary

- Brush, Book, Bed:  
From the American  
Academy of  
Pediatrics, a routine  
recommendation for  
young children
- Activity



**Brush,  
Book, Bed:**

**A Routine to Structure  
Your Child's Bedtime.**

# Older Elementary

## Tooth Emergency

- If experiencing a mouth injury, find the tooth (holding it by the top part/crown), put the tooth in milk, stop any bleeding with a clean cloth/gauze and ice for any swelling, and contact a dental professional soon.

## Healthy Drinks

- Water and milk are the best choices for our teeth. Limit sugary drinks, as that sugar sits on your teeth, feeding bacteria that causes acid and cavities.

Resources for tracking [healthy habits](#) can be found at this link.

# Brushing and Flossing at Home

## Brushing & Flossing Chart

Remember to brush your teeth twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste!  
Use this chart to keep track of your healthy toothbrushing habit.

1. Check each ☀ when you brush in the morning.
2. Check each 🌙 when you brush before bed.
3. Check each 🦷 when you floss before bed.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday		Sunday	

# Middle School – High School

## Tooth Safety

- Utilize a mouthguard for sports activities.
- Following orthodontist visits for braces.
- Not using teeth as tools for opening things, etc.

## Vaping and Tobacco Use

- Oral Cancer risk, as well as chronic cough, mouth sores, dry mouth, and discoloration.

### First Aid for Dental Emergencies

Remember, in all cases to **stay calm** and reassure the person; **wear gloves** if blood and/or saliva is present; and do not give pain relievers **unless a person gives consent**.

#### Broken Braces and Wires



- Cover broken wires with wax or gauze until the child can be seen by an orthodontist.
- Do not remove the wire embedded in the cheek, tongue, or gums.
- **The child should see their orthodontist immediately.**

#### Knocked Out Permanent Tooth



- Find the tooth. Handle the tooth by the top of the tooth, not the root.
- Gently replace the tooth in its socket and hold the tooth in place.
- If the tooth cannot be reinserted into the socket, put the tooth into a cup of fresh milk. Do not put the tooth into tap water.
- **See a dentist immediately.** A tooth that is quickly reimplanted has a good chance of being saved.

#### Toothache or Abscess



- Rinse the mouth well with warm salt water to remove any food debris.
- Do not place aspirin on the site of the toothache because it may cause burning.
- If the face is swollen, place a cold compress on the outside of the cheek.
- **See a dentist as soon as possible.**

#### Broken Tooth



- Gently clean dirt from the injured area with warm water.
- Place a cold compress on the face over the injured area.
- Locate and save any broken tooth fragments if possible.
- **See a dentist immediately.**

#### Cut or Bitten Tongue, Lip, or Cheek



- Clean area with a clean, wet cloth.
- Apply pressure with cloth to stop the bleeding.
- Apply ice to the swollen or bruised areas.
- **If bleeding does not stop after 15 minutes, or with pressure, the child should be seen by a dentist or doctor.**

#### Possible Broken Jaw



- **Immediately call 911.**
- The person's jaw line may appear distorted.
- Keep the person still and calm. Make sure the person can breathe.



**Tip for Home:** Save a screenshot or photo of this handout. Hang a copy on your refrigerator too!

# Sources

- American Academy of Pediatrics. (n.d.). Oral Health in Schools. Retrieved June 2, 2025, from <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/school-health/oral-health-in-schools/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2025). Health Disparities in Oral Health. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/oral-health/health-equity/>
- Asian Pacific Health Care Venture, Inc. (2025). Oral Health Affects Your Health. Retrieved from <https://www.aphcv.org/oral-health-affects-your-health/>
- CareQuest Institute for Oral Health. (2022). How Depression is Linked to Oral Health. Retrieved from [https://www.carequest.org/system/files/CareQuest\\_Institute\\_How-Depression-is-Linked-to-Oral-Health\\_5.23.22.pdf](https://www.carequest.org/system/files/CareQuest_Institute_How-Depression-is-Linked-to-Oral-Health_5.23.22.pdf)
- Delta Dental of Minnesota. (2017). Oral Health and Overall Health: The Connection. Retrieved from <https://blog.deltadentalmn.org/oral-health-and-overall-health-the-connection>
- American Dental Association. (n.d.). Baby teeth. MouthHealthy.org. Retrieved March 21, 2025, from <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/all-topics-a-z/baby-teeth>
- Do and Don't for Middle and High School: [https://www.hhs.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/DOH%20Legacy/Protecting\\_Your\\_Smile\\_in\\_Middle\\_and\\_High\\_School.pdf](https://www.hhs.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/DOH%20Legacy/Protecting_Your_Smile_in_Middle_and_High_School.pdf)
- Oral Health Education (curriculum and videos for K-2, 3-5, and 6-8): <https://www.ncdental.org/for-the-public/oral-health-education>
- Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center: <https://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/resguideschooloh.pdf>
- Book, Brush, Bed Resources: [https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/oral-health/oral-health-resources-for-families/?\\_gl=1\\*6tgtul\\*\\_ga\\*MTIwOTA4OTQ5NC4xNzQ2NTQyNTgy\\*\\_ga\\_FD9D3XZVQQ\\*czE3NDY3OTg2OTMkbzmkZzEkdDE3NDY3OTkwMjQkajAkbDAkaDA](https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/oral-health/oral-health-resources-for-families/?_gl=1*6tgtul*_ga*MTIwOTA4OTQ5NC4xNzQ2NTQyNTgy*_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ*czE3NDY3OTg2OTMkbzmkZzEkdDE3NDY3OTkwMjQkajAkbDAkaDA).
- Chen, T. (2024, February 12). *Big hopes for little teeth*. National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/news-events/nidcr-news/2024/big-hopes-little-teeth>



Thank You!