Diet

- **Reduce** the frequency of consuming *food and drinks containing sugar*.
- Snacking between meals should be free of sugars.
- Avoid frequent consumption of drinks containing acids (i.e. colas).

Fluoridation

- Remember that water fluoridation is a safe, equitable, and highly effective public health measure.
- Determine if your local water supply is fluoridated and, if not, support local efforts for optimal prevention.
- Use the schedule at right to prescribe *systemic* fluoride supplements for children under 16 living in areas without fluoride.
- For *topical* application of fluoride, review the Caries Risk Assessment Tool Policy available at www.aapd.org/media/policies.asp.

### Fluoride Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>&lt;0.3 ppm</th>
<th>0.3–0.6 ppm</th>
<th>&gt;0.6 ppm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth—6 months</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months–3 years</td>
<td>0.25 mg daily</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years–6 years</td>
<td>0.5 mg daily</td>
<td>0.25 mg daily</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 years–16 years</td>
<td>1.0 mg daily</td>
<td>0.5 mg daily</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Fluoride ion level in child’s primary water source (ppm)*

Visiting a dentist

- Start dental visits after a child’s first tooth erupts or by age one.
- Visit the dentist as often as recommended for regular checkups and professional cleanings.
- Schedule more frequent exams in those for whom oral disease may be a particular risk to health, such as patients with heart disease, pregnancy, and diabetes.
- Have an oral cancer exam every year even if you don’t have teeth.

Sealants

- Sealants are plastic coatings that are placed on the chewing surfaces of the back teeth to prevent cavities.
- Sealants protect the chewing surfaces of the back teeth and do not replace fluoride; fluoride works best on the smooth surfaces of all the teeth.

Tooth Brushing

- Brush all tooth surfaces thoroughly using a soft-bristled nylon toothbrush and an age-appropriate amount of toothpaste (a thin film for toddlers and preschoolers, a pea-size dab for children, and a modest amount for adults).
- Remove plaque by brushing twice and *flossing your teeth at least once a day* to prevent periodontal disease.
References and Resources

- Academy of General Dentistry: www.agd.org
- American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry: www.aapd.org
- American Dental Association: www.ada.org
- Bright Futures in Practice: Oral Health: www.brightfutures.org/publications/index.html
- Children’s Dental Health Project: www.cdhp.org
- American Association of Public Health Dentistry: www.aaphd.org
- Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Oral Health Initiative: www.hrsa.gov/oralhealth

Established in 1996, the Association of Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU) is a 501 (c)3, nonprofit, transdisciplinary organization whose mission is to improve the health of underserved populations by enhancing the development and support of the health care clinicians serving these populations.

ACU currently has an established constituency of 50,000 clinicians and over 1,000 organizations making up a unique cadre of health professionals, advocacy organizations, geographic regions, practice models, and patient populations. ACU’s members and its constituency are united by their common dedication towards improving access to high quality medical, behavioral, oral and pharmaceutical health care for our Nation’s underserved communities.

If you are a clinician serving underserved patients or are personally committed to improving the health of communities that lack access to comprehensive health care and preventive services, we encourage you to join.

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