



How Long Should My Child Keep Their Baby Teeth?

Learn when baby teeth should fall out, what to do if they don't, and how Just 4 kiDDS supports healthy dental transitions in growing children.

[Baby Teeth](#)

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Baby teeth may be small, but they play a big role in your child's oral health and development. At Just 4 kiDDS, we often hear from parents wondering when their child should start losing baby teeth—and expect and when to take action to help keep your child on the healthy, on-track path.

The Role of Baby Teeth in Your Child's Development

It might seem like baby teeth are just placeholders for permanent ones, but they do a lot more than just fill space. These early teeth help your child chew properly, develop clear speech, and maintain space for the permanent teeth growing underneath. When baby teeth fall out too early or too late, it can affect everything from alignment to oral hygiene routines.

At Just 4 kiDDS, we keep a close eye on baby teeth during routine **pediatric dental exams**, helping families understand how and when baby teeth should transition naturally. Our goal is to ensure a smooth, healthy shift from baby teeth to adult teeth.

Still wondering why those tiny teeth matter so much? Learn how they shape your child's smile in [Why Are Baby Teeth Important for Your Child's Dental Development?](#)

When Do Baby Teeth Usually Start to Fall Out?

The process of losing baby teeth typically begins around age six and continues until around age 12. It usually starts with the lower front teeth, followed by the upper front teeth. As the permanent teeth begin to push through the gums, the roots of the baby teeth dissolve and the baby teeth loosen and fall out.

This process varies from child to child. Some kids start losing teeth earlier or later than average. The timing can depend on when the baby teeth first erupted and other developmental factors. During regular dental cleanings and checkups, we monitor this timeline to ensure everything is progressing as it should.

Is It a Problem If Baby Teeth Don't Fall Out on Time?

If baby teeth stick around too long, they can interfere with the eruption of permanent teeth. This can lead to crowding, misalignment, or impaction (when a permanent tooth can't break through the gum). While it's not always cause for concern, late loss of baby teeth is something we track closely

during your child's visits.

In some cases, we may recommend a dental X-ray to see what's happening below the surface. If a permanent tooth is on its way but the baby tooth isn't budging, we may suggest a **tooth extraction** to avoid complications. Rest assured, we take a conservative, kid-friendly approach to any treatment.

*Wondering if dental X-rays are safe for your child and when they might be needed? We break it all down in **[Are Dental X-Rays Safe For My Child?](#)***

What Happens If Baby Teeth Fall Out Too Early?

Sometimes, baby teeth are lost earlier than expected—often due to trauma or decay. When this happens, it can leave a gap that the surrounding teeth start to shift into, which may block the path of the permanent tooth.

To prevent this, we may recommend a **space maintainer**, which helps preserve the gap until the permanent tooth is ready to erupt. These are custom-fitted and easy to manage, and they play an important role in maintaining proper alignment.

We always aim to provide families with preventative solutions to support healthy development. If your child loses a tooth unexpectedly, we offer **emergency dental care** to address the issue right away.

What to Expect as Permanent Teeth Arrive

Permanent teeth typically follow a predictable eruption pattern, but even within this structure, kids vary. The molars are often the first permanent teeth to come in, followed by incisors, canines, and then premolars.

As the permanent teeth erupt, you may notice changes in alignment or spacing. Regular **orthodontic evaluations** can help determine if your child may need early orthodontic care. They can guide you through options if treatment is needed.

We help families navigate this transition by offering insight, reassurance, and referrals when needed. Whether it's monitoring growth or discussing concerns, our team is here to help.

*Noticing a permanent tooth showing up before the baby tooth is gone? We explain what to do in **[My Child Has a Permanent Tooth Coming in Behind Their Baby Tooth](#)**.*

Encouraging Good Habits During the Transition

As kids go through the process of losing baby teeth and gaining permanent ones, it's a great time to reinforce healthy habits. Good oral hygiene is essential for keeping the new teeth strong and cavity-free.

Our team provides support and tips during each dental cleaning and checkup, such as:

- Encouraging twice-daily brushing with fluoride toothpaste
- Teaching gentle flossing techniques as more permanent teeth arrive
- Discussing nutrition and habits that support oral health

We also emphasize the value of fluoride treatments to strengthen enamel and reduce the risk of decay in newly erupted teeth. The more proactive we are during this transition, the better the outcomes for your child's long-term oral health.

*Curious about how fluoride strengthens your child's teeth and helps prevent cavities? Dive deeper with **[How Does Fluoride Protect Your Child's Smile?](#)***

Signs It's Time to Schedule a Visit

While some variation in tooth loss is normal, there are times when it's a good idea to check in with us. Schedule an appointment if:

- Your child hasn't lost any teeth by age 7
- Baby teeth are still present after age 13
- Teeth are falling out in an unusual order
- Permanent teeth are erupting behind baby teeth (also called "shark teeth")
- You're unsure whether a loose tooth is ready to come out

In all these cases, we can assess what's going on and determine whether intervention is necessary. Our gentle, thorough approach helps kids feel at ease while we provide answers and guidance.

*If your child's wire, bracket, or space maintainer has come loose or broken, don't panic—we've got you covered in **[My Child's Braces, Wire, or Space Maintainer Just Broke. What Do I Do?](#)***

The Just 4 kiDDS Approach to Growing Smiles

At Just 4 kiDDS, we specialize in helping children through every stage of dental development. From first teeth to final baby tooth, we're here to monitor, protect, and promote healthy growth. Our kid-friendly environment and compassionate team ensure that children feel safe and supported at every visit.

We offer a wide range of services tailored to growing smiles, including:

- **Pediatric dental exams**

- Dental cleanings
- Fluoride treatments
- Dental X-rays
- Tooth extractions
- Emergency dental care

Each service is designed with kids in mind, using age-appropriate techniques and a focus on prevention. We know dental care isn't one-size-fits-all, and we tailor our approach to meet your child's unique needs.

Let’s Keep Those Little Smiles on Track

Every baby tooth has a job to do—and when it's time for them to move on, our team is here to make sure that transition happens the right way. Whether your child is starting to wiggle their first tooth or still holding on to those back molars, we're here to provide the care and clarity you need.

Contact us today to schedule your child's next visit and keep their smile right on schedule. From Idaho Falls to Pocatello, our friendly team is ready to support your family every step of the way.

Related Questions

At what age should my child lose their first baby tooth?

Most children lose their first baby tooth around age 6, but some start as early as 4 or as late as 7.

Is it normal for adult teeth to grow in behind baby teeth?

Yes, this can happen and is commonly referred to as "shark teeth." If the baby tooth doesn't loosen or fall out soon, we may need to help it along.

How can I tell if my child’s teeth are falling out in the right order?

The lower central incisors usually fall out first. We can confirm if things are progressing normally during a **pediatric dental exam**.

Do baby teeth need to be pulled if they’re not falling out on their own?

Not always, but if a baby tooth is blocking a permanent tooth, we may recommend a simple **tooth extraction** to avoid misalignment.

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