

AIRWAY & BREATHING

How your child breathes — especially while sleeping — can affect how their face, jaws, and teeth develop, as well as their sleep, focus, and mood. Dental visits are a great time to notice early signs, and we're here to help you know what to look for and when to take the next step.

SIGNS AT NIGHT

- Snoring most nights, or loud, noisy breathing
- Breathing through the mouth while asleep
- Pauses in breathing, gasping, or snorting
- Restless sleep or unusual sleeping positions, such as head tilted far back
- Teeth grinding or bedwetting beyond the expected age

SIGNS DURING THE DAY

- Mouth often open at rest, or dry, cracked lips
- Tiredness, trouble waking up, or daytime sleepiness
- Difficulty focusing, irritability, or hyperactivity
- Frequent congestion, allergies, or enlarged tonsils
- Slow or messy eating, or trouble chewing and swallowing

WHEN TO ACT

- Loud snoring with pauses or gasping: contact your pediatrician promptly.
- Any of the signs above that keep showing up: mention them at your child's next dental visit.

WHAT WE LOOK FOR AT A VISIT

- A narrow palate, crowded teeth, or a crossbite
- How your child rests their tongue and lips
- Restricted tongue or lip movement (tongue-tie)
- Enlarged tonsils or signs of chronic mouth breathing
- Gum inflammation, dry mouth, and cavity risk linked to mouth breathing
- Wear on teeth that may point to grinding

WHAT YOU CAN DO AT HOME

- Jot down what you notice at night, such as snoring, pauses, or restless sleep. A short video can help the doctor.
- Ask your pediatrician about managing allergies and congestion.
- Keep a steady bedtime routine and a calm, screen-free wind-down.
- Encourage a closed-lip, nose-breathing habit during the day.
- Offer chewy, crunchy foods that support healthy jaw development.

A TEAM APPROACH TO YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

A dental screening can flag concerns, but it is not a diagnosis. If we notice signs of an airway or breathing issue, we'll talk with you about next steps and, when appropriate, coordinate with your child's pediatrician, an ear-nose-throat (ENT) specialist, an orthodontist, or a sleep specialist.