



Patient Information Leaflet

Children's Teeth

Cork University Dental
School & Hospital



This leaflet has been designed to help you understand your children's teeth and it contains answers to many of the commonly asked questions. If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer, or you would like further explanation, please ask us.

When will my children's teeth appear?

First or 'baby' teeth have formed before your child is born and will start to appear in the mouth at around 6 months of age. Lower teeth tend to appear about 2 months before the upper teeth. All 20 baby teeth are usually through by the age of two and a half.

The first permanent 'adult' molars (back teeth) will appear at about 6 years of age. These come through at the very back of the mouth behind the baby teeth and can go unnoticed. They may easily decay as they are vulnerable at this stage so they need to be cleaned very well once they appear. At about the same time the front lower and upper baby teeth begin to loosen and are replaced by 8 adult incisor teeth.

At age 8 to 9 years some of the other baby teeth begin to fall out and they are replaced by adult teeth. At around 12 years of age, all the baby teeth should have fallen out and the 4 second permanent molars appear at the back of the mouth. Finally, the last teeth to appear are the wisdom teeth or third molars. Not everybody has third molars and there is a lot of variation in the age at which they appear (normally 18-25 years of age).

Primary Teeth (Baby Teeth)

Although primary teeth fall out and are replaced by adult teeth they are very important for eating, appearance and speech. They are also very important for keeping space for the permanent teeth which develop underneath.

Tooth decay can cause pain and infection and dental treatment can be difficult in young children so it is important to have good dental hygiene habits, including brushing and healthy eating habits from an early age.

This leaflet is available online at <http://www.ucc.ie/en/dentalschool/patients>