

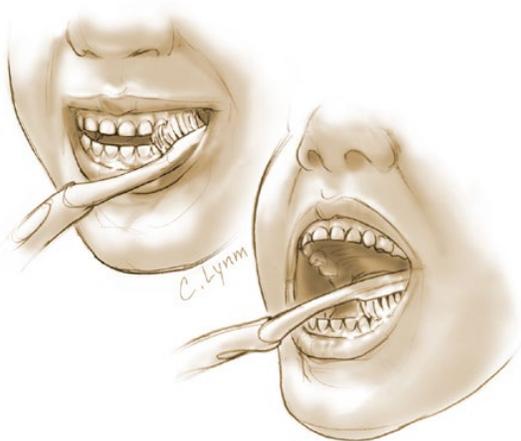


SPECIAL CARE

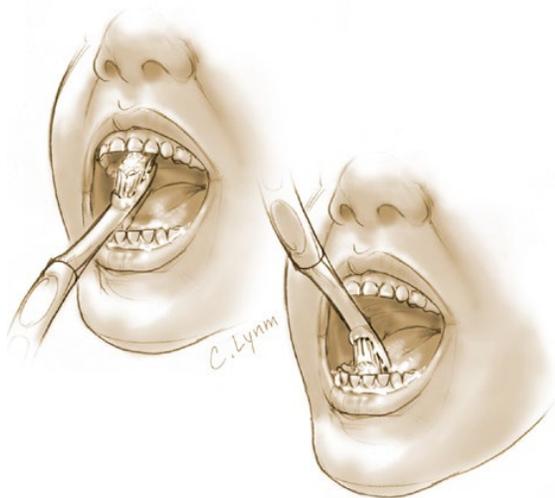
An Oral Health Professional's Guide to Serving Children with Special Health Care Needs

Toothbrushing

1. Put toothbrush bristles at the child's gum line at a 45-degree angle. Press gently, and use short back-and-forth strokes. Start with the upper teeth, brushing the outside, the inside, and the chewing surfaces. Do the same for the lower teeth. Be sure to brush each tooth. Gently brush the tongue, too.



2. Place the toothbrush vertically to clean the inside and upper and lower surfaces of the teeth.



3. For children who want to help brush their teeth, try the "roll" method. Let the child hold the toothbrush, and turn her wrist a little. Follow the shape of the teeth. Or try the "circular" method. With the child's lips closed over the toothbrush handle, put the toothbrush inside the cheek and the tips of the bristles lightly touching the teeth. Use a gentle, fast, wide, circular motion.



Notes

An adult should always supervise toothbrushing and do the final brushing until the child can brush well without help. Most children with no developmental delays develop this skill by age 7 or 8. Some children with special health care needs will never be able to brush by themselves.

Ask your child's oral health professional to tell you the best way to brush your child's teeth and to show you how to do it.