

AUTISM – Caring For Your Child’s Dental Health

Children with autism can face additional challenges in maintaining good dental health
To assist you in caring for your child, here is what to watch out for and some helpful tips.

<p>Tooth decay Poor oral health can cause a build up of plaque leading to the destruction of enamel (tooth decay)</p>	<p>Effective brushing will help remove plaque</p>
<p>Gum disease Poor oral health can lead to bleeding gums which is a first sign of gum disease</p>	<p>Effective brushing can protect against gum disease</p>
<p>Dry mouth Some medications given to children with autism may cause dry mouth which increases the risk of tooth decay</p>	<p>Seek advice about medications from the G.P. and encourage your child to sip water regularly</p>
<p>Teeth grinding or orthodontic issues Some children with autism may clench or grind their teeth and this can lead to cracked teeth or pain in the jaw line</p>	<p>Seek advice from the dentist about mouth guards</p>
<p>Broken teeth/lost teeth Teeth may be broken or knocked out from biting hard objects, falls or seizures</p>	<p>If a tooth is knocked out put the tooth straight back in (if dirty rinse clean with milk or saline) or store in milk. See the dentist asap</p>

Some Helpful Tips.....



Involve your child in selecting their toothbrush as some children may be drawn to certain colours or textures. Some may prefer a manual brush



Prepare your child for toothbrushing. Let your child feel the brush and teach your child to ‘open wide’. Show your child how you brush your teeth



Find a dentist who has experience with children who have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)



Book a desensitisation appointment to help your child become familiar with the dental clinic



Before going to the dentist your child may benefit from visual supports – step by step pictures of the planned dental visit