

Diagram of Mouth

Overview—Tooth Development

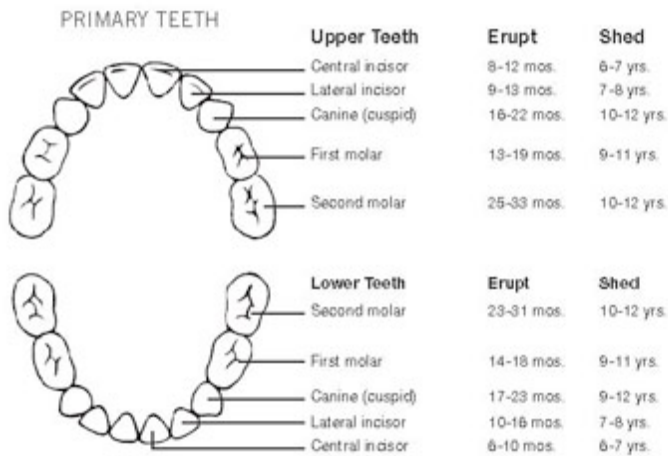
Most people have two sets of teeth during their life: the primary or “baby” teeth and the permanent or “adult” teeth.

The 20 primary teeth that will appear during the first 3 years of life are present at birth in the baby’s jawbones. Baby teeth are important in normal development for chewing, speaking and appearance. The baby teeth also hold the space in the jaws for the permanent (adult) teeth. Primary teeth may be temporary but they need good care for many years.

From around age 6 to age 12, children will lose their baby teeth and the adult teeth will appear. The first adult teeth to come in are the first permanent molars. The first permanent molars are especially important because they help determine the shape of the lower face and affect the position and health of other permanent teeth. The last teeth to appear are the third molars or “wisdom teeth” at around age 17 – 21 years. By age 21, all 32 of the permanent teeth have usually appeared.

Teeth vary in size, shape and their location in the jaws. These differences enable teeth to work together to help you chew, speak and smile. They also help give your face its shape and form. It is important to protect the adult teeth for a lifetime by brushing twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste, by cleaning between the teeth once a day with floss or an interdental cleaner and by visiting a dentist regularly.

Eruption Charts



Permanent Tooth Eruption Chart

