

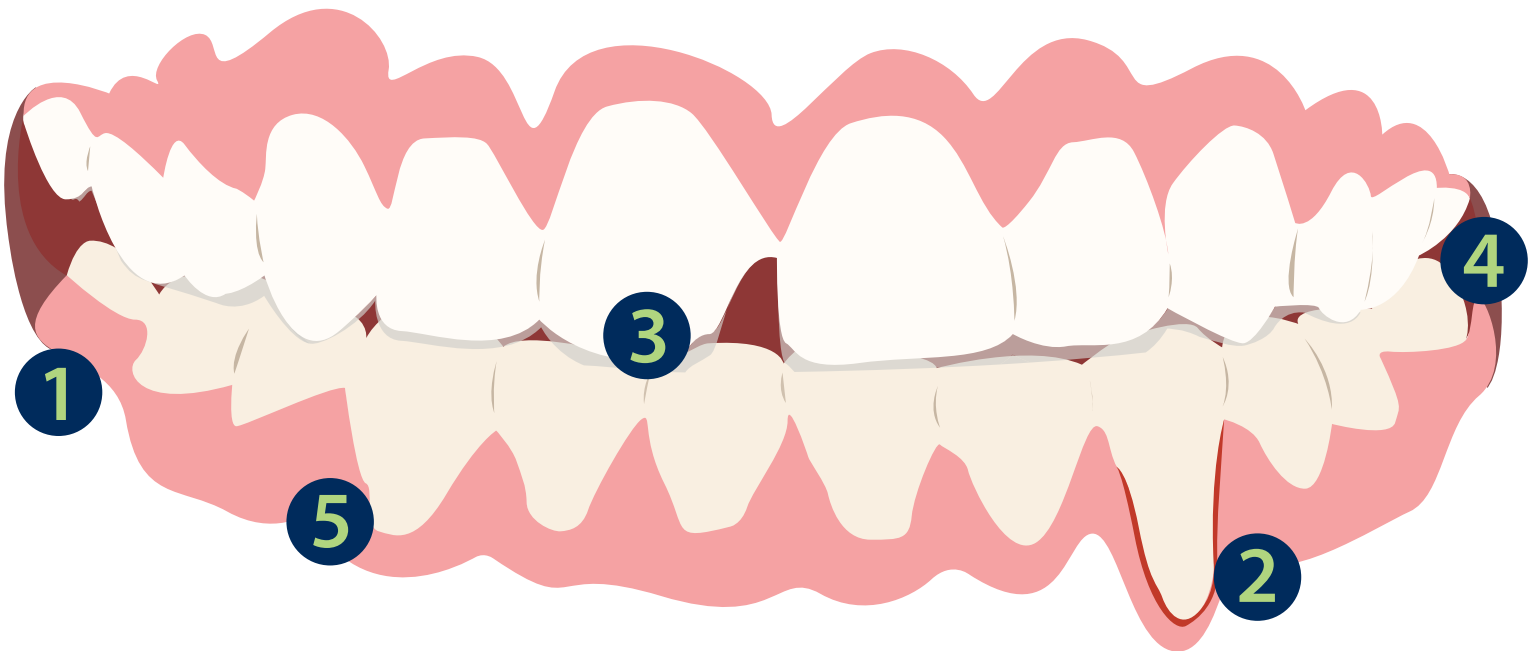
# The Importance of Dental Visits

Regular dental visits provide the opportunity to treat problems when they are simple and more affordable or prevent problems from occurring. For example, cavities and gum disease, when recognized early, are treatable. Keeping your mouth healthy is an essential piece of any health plan.

A child's first dental visit should take place after their first tooth appears, but no later than the first birthday. Why so early? As soon as your baby has teeth, they can get cavities.

## What to Expect During Your Dentist Visit

If you're anxious about having a dental exam, share your concerns with your dentist or hygienist. They might be able to adjust your treatment to help you feel more comfortable.



During your dental exam, the dentist or hygienist will:

1. Evaluate your overall health, medications, and oral hygiene.
  - Exams might also include counseling on diet, tobacco use, and other lifestyle factors that can affect your oral health.
2. Assess your risk of tooth decay, root decay, and gum or bone disease.
  - Medications that cause dry mouth can increase your risk of tooth decay.
3. Evaluate your need for tooth repair or replacement.
4. Check your bite and jaw for problems.
  - If you have dentures or bridges, they will examine how well they fit and discuss adjustments if needed.
5. Remove stains or deposits on your teeth.

While at your dental exam, the dentist or hygienist will demonstrate proper cleaning techniques and assess your need for fluoride. You could also receive dental X-rays if necessary.