

Bite & Teeth

A bite describes when the upper and lower teeth are in contact. The jaw muscles and joints, teeth, and jaw bones make up your bite which affect how well you chew, speak, and maintain good teeth alignment.

From infancy to school age, baby teeth grow in and align, and then they are replaced by permanent teeth. This is the period of time that determines Take your child to get a checkup at the dentist regularly and keep an eye on their bite.

Great teeth alignment lead to...

Easier chewing

Better jaw development



Better pronunciation

Being less prone to cavities and periodontal disease

Better posture

[What affects bite?]

- Genetics and jaw bone development
- Habits such as sucking fingers and pacifiers, biting nails and lips, and leaving your tongue out.
- Leaving mouth open, mouth breathing
- Not getting treatment after losing a tooth
- Injuries such as from falling or hitting something
- Unhealthy postures such as resting your head in your hands or hunching over.
- Sleeping facedown or on your side

Treat tooth decay as soon as possible! Diseases in the nose and throat can also cause mouth breathing. Consult with a medical professional if you notice any signs.



Teeth misalignment and malocclusions



Open bite

This is when the upper and lower front teeth do not meet even when the back teeth are brought together. (Sucking on fingers and pacifiers, and mouth breathing are common causes.)



Maxillary

(Also called: buck teeth)
This is when your upper teeth (jaw) protrudes over your lower teeth (jaw).



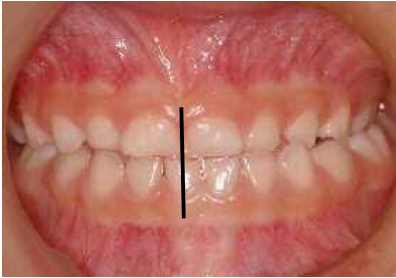
Overbite

The lower teeth are completely covered by the upper teeth.



Underbite

This is when the lower jaw protrudes further than the upper jaw causing the lower teeth to cover the upper teeth.



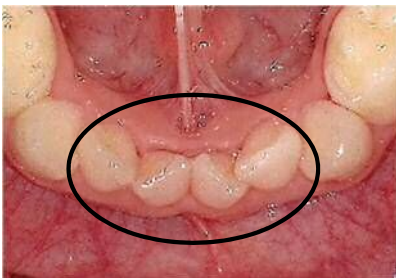
Crossbite

When viewed from the front, the lower jaw is off-center to the left or right.



Edge to Edge Bite

A condition in which the upper teeth do not cover the lower teeth. Instead, only the tips of the teeth make contact together.



Crowding

(Also called: crooked teeth)

A condition in which there is not enough space in the mouth due to either the teeth being too large or the mouth being too small.

Normal bite

(Correct alignment)



Photo Credit: IKEMORI Yoshiyuki, Dentist

Permanent teeth will line up nicely if there is space between baby teeth!



Orthodontic treatment

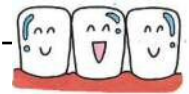


If you were told during the 3-year-old checkup that care may be needed for your child, consult with a specialist such as an orthodontist or pediatric dentist. Orthodontic treatments enhance the function of the teeth and mouth by improving bite and tooth alignment, and by preventing tooth decay, periodontal disease, and temporomandibular (jaw) joint disease.

Finger-sucking

Starting around age 3, gradually reduce how often your child sucks their fingers.

Instead of forcing them to stop, teach them why not to do it and encourage them along the way.



[Methods of Encouragement]

- Praise your child for not putting their fingers in their mouth.
- Give them more activities that use the hands and mouth
- Create an environment where they can focus on playing.
- Make adjustments to their daily routine to get proper sleep.
(Hold hands, read books, etc. until they fall asleep)
- Teach your child why not to suck their fingers.

