



## Tooth Brushing Tips and Tricks

Brushing can be tough for a little one with special needs. Oral aversions can make it even more of a fight. Here are some tips and tricks to make it a little easier

- We recommend using a 3-sided toothbrush. These brushes are designed to clean all surfaces of the teeth with no need to change the angle of the brush. This can also speed up the brushing process and be done faster.
- For children with small mouths or have tense facial muscles, using a very small toothbrush can help get to the spots that a larger toothbrush may not fit
- Some children may be at risk for aspiration or have difficulties swallowing. In this case, we recommend brushing without toothpaste. At the end of brushing place a small amount of toothpaste (a grain of rice size for children under 3, and a pea size for children over 3) on your finger and quickly swoosh your finger inside your child's mouth. This way they get the benefits of brushing and fluoride while minimizing risks of aspiration or making a mess. After brushing your child goes to bed and shouldn't have anything else to eat or drink to allow the fluoride to absorb into the teeth.
- Using a bed as a pretend dental chair can help you see your child's teeth better and have more control of the toothbrush. We recommend laying your little one down on a bed with their head near your lap. It's even better if you have a partner to help you in case your child gets a little wiggly during brushing.

