



TIP SHEET

Choosing a Toothbrush for Your Child



There are many types of modified toothbrushes available that might make brushing teeth easier or more tolerable for your child. You can also make simple adaptations to a regular toothbrush to make it easier for your child to use. Following is a list of types of toothbrushes and adaptations that could be useful for your child.

If your child is just getting used to a toothbrush

You can try various **infant toothbrushes**: An ovalshaped to prevent the toothbrush from going too far into your child's mouth, a **finger toothbrush**, which is a small round-tipped toothbrush that fits snugly over your finger, or a Nuk brush which has rubbery bristles.

If your child has difficulties holding a toothbrush

You can add a **cylindrical foam grip** to the handle of a regular toothbrush to make it easier to grasp. Some parents have also made the toothbrush easier to hold by outfitting the handle with a tennis ball or bicycle handle, and others have wrapped the handle in tape or nylon.

If your child has difficulties controlling a toothbrush

You can try a modified toothbrush that has a **flexible handle and a mouth guard**. The soft handle is designed for children with small hands or poor fine motor skills, and the mouth guard prevents your child from inserting the toothbrush too far into his or her mouth or throat.

If your child cannot tolerate tooth brushing for a long period

You can use a **modified toothbrush that has three sided bristles**, so that he or she can brush the inside, outside, and biting surfaces of the teeth at the same time.

If your child has sensory needs

You can try an **electric toothbrush**; the buzzing from the toothbrush sometimes can be calming for children who have oral sensitivities or who are sensory seeking. Some children might also enjoy a **glow-in-the-dark toothbrush**, or a **light-up toothbrush**.

Disclaimer: This information is provided for reference only. Consult your dentist before engaging in any procedures, practices, or treatments. You can find many styles of toothbrushes at your local pharmacy or grocery store. You can also find choices from online vendors like www.dentist.net. Remember: keep trying until you find what works best for your child!

These tips were compiled from a variety of sources. For more tip sheets, visit www.fraser.org.

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