

WHY DO CHILDREN HAVE DISCOLORED TEETH?

AS YOUR CHILD'S TEETH ERUPT YOU MAY NOTICE MOTTLING OF CERTAIN TEETH OR A DIFFERENCE IN COLOR BETWEEN TEETH. THESE COLOR DIFFERENCES CAN BE A NORMAL STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT AS CHILDREN'S PERMANENT TEETH ARE OFTEN NATURALLY DARKER THAN THEIR BABY TEETH. THEY MAY ALSO INDICATE MALFORMATION OF THE TEETH DUE TO VARIOUS INFLUENCES.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why are my Child's Teeth Discolored?

Children's teeth, even while still in the gums, can be influenced by many factors.

Here are some factors that can cause discoloration in children's teeth:

- **Bacteria** – Poor or ineffective brushing habits can lead to a buildup of bacteria on the teeth, which can cause discoloration. If your child's teeth look yellow or orange, it's most likely because they aren't being cleaned thoroughly and have developed a build-up of stained plaque.
- **Injury** – A tooth can look pink or grey if it has been injured.
- **Fluoride** – The correct amount of fluoride makes the tooth enamel more resistant to decay. However, exposure to excessive levels over a period of time can cause discolorations such as white spots, white streaks, or brown tinting in your child's teeth
- **Genetics** – Some genetic conditions can lead to underdeveloped tooth enamel that can be discolored or can be more likely to collect stain over time.
- **Illness** – Newborn illness such as hepatitis, heart disease, jaundice, high fevers or a long-term chronic illness can cause discolorations on your child's teeth.
- **Medications** – Exposure to certain medications can discolor a child's teeth. Taking some medications (such as tetracycline) during pregnancy can affect your child's teeth. Iron or vitamin supplements can produce darkened spots on the teeth.

2. How do I manage my Child's Discolored Teeth?

While discolored teeth in children are often not normal, they may not require treatment. It is important to understand the cause of discoloration. A visit to the dentist will help determine why the teeth are discolored and if any treatment is necessary.