Deciduous Teeth

The deciduous teeth are 20 in number, they start erupting at 6th month (mandibular central incisor), and they finish at the age of 20-30 month (Mandibular and maxillary second molars).

The importance of deciduous teeth:
1. Allow proper mastication.
2. Prevents malocclusion.
4. Esthetics.
5. Phonetics.

The deciduous teeth roots are fully formed after eruption, then after a while resorption of the roots starts until exfoliation of the teeth occurs, followed by the eruption of permanent successor teeth.

Maxillary deciduous teeth
Central and lateral incisors:
1. The mesio-distal dimension is greater than labiolingual dimension.
2. The root: crown ratio is increased.
3. From mesial and distal aspect, the crown appears thicker because of the short crown’s length.

Canine:
1. Labially, the crown is more constricted at the cervical area, so the cusp and the slopes are seen more developed.
2. The mesial slope of the cusp is longer than distal one.
3. The mesial and distal contact areas are at the same level.
4. The root: crown ratio is increased.
5. Mesially and distally the crown appear thicker because of short crown.

First molars:

1. There are four cusps (mesiolingual (largest), mesiobuccal, distobuccal, and distolingual.
2. There are three roots: lingual, mesiobuccal and distobuccal.

Second molars:

1. There are five cusps (four well developed and one supplemental) which are: (mesiolingual (largest), mesiobuccal, distobuccal, distolingual and fifth cusp.
2. There are three roots: lingual, mesiobuccal and distobuccal.

Mandibular deciduous teeth:

Centrals and lateral incisors:

1. They are wider mesiodistally in relation to their length more than the permanent mandibular incisors.
2. The root: crown ratio is increased.
3. The labiolingual width appears more due to the short crown’s length.

Canines:

1. The labiolingual dimension is much less than the maxillary deciduous canine.
2. The cervical ridge is less pronounced than the maxillary deciduous canine.
3. The distal slope of the cusp is larger than mesial one.

**First molars:**

1. There are four cusps: mesiolingual (largest), mesiobuccal, distobuccal, and distolingual (smallest).
2. There are two roots: mesial and distal.

**Second molars:**

1. There are five cusps: mesiolingual (largest), mesiobuccal, distobuccal and distolingual and distal cusp.
2. There are two roots: mesial and distal.

**Principal differences between deciduous and permanent teeth**

**General differences:**

1. Deciduous teeth are 20 in number while the permanent are 32.
2. The deciduous teeth are smaller in all dimensions.
3. Deciduous teeth show less anatomical variation.
4. The enamel of deciduous teeth is whiter and more opaque, so they appear whiter than permanent teeth.
5. The enamel of the deciduous teeth is thinner (0.5-1mm), while in the permanent teeth it’s (1.5-2.5 mm).

**Crown differences:**

1. The crowns of all deciduous posterior teeth are more constricted at the cervix.
2. The cervical ridges in all deciduous teeth are more prominent.
3. The intercuspal distance of the deciduous teeth is more constricted buccolingually.
4. The crowns of the deciduous anterior teeth are wider mesiodistally as compared with crowns length.

**Root differences:**

1. Lack of root trunk in all deciduous teeth.
2. The roots of the deciduous teeth are shorter, weaker and narrower.
3. The roots of deciduous teeth are longer in proportion to the crown length.
4. The roots of deciduous molars are wider than the crown, to allow more room for the development of the successor permanent teeth.
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