

KEEP THOSE BABY TEETH CAVITY FREE

Many parents and grandparents think that since their children get two sets of teeth, "baby teeth" are not important, that it doesn't matter if they get tooth decay. This is a huge mistake.

Dental disease is the #1 childhood disease, an infection that causes pain and overall poor health. Dental disease if left untreated can lead to hospitalization.

Your child's primary (baby) teeth are of great importance to your baby's healthy development. Here is what cavity-free primary teeth do for your child --

- ★ Helps your baby stay healthy and free from pain – dental decay is an infection which can travel to other parts of the body
- ★ Holds spaces for the permanent teeth so they don't come in crooked
- ★ Allows your baby's jaw to grow properly
- ★ Permits your toddler to learn to eat healthy foods that need strong teeth to chew such as carrots, multi-grain bread
- ★ Assists your child in forming sounds when learning to speak
- ★ Gives your child a healthy and pretty smile

Here's how to keep your infant and toddler cavity free:

Clean the child's mouth even before the first tooth emerges. This not only keeps the oral cavity clean, but establishes a daily hygiene routine to last a lifetime. For an infant, begin by laying the baby across your lap. Gently rub the upper and lower gums with a piece of gauze or a clean, wet washcloth. Do this at least two times a day, after breakfast and after the last feeding before bedtime.

Begin brushing that first tooth as soon as it comes in to stop decay before it starts. Food and plaque must be removed from all surfaces on the teeth, including between the teeth. To brush an infant or toddler's teeth, hold them in your lap. Use a small, soft tooth brush. A tiny smear of toothpaste with fluoride is recommended by the age of one. When brushing the teeth, use a small, circular motion, trying to concentrate on each individual tooth. Tooth brushing should be performed at least twice daily, and the very last thing at night time, after supper and any snack.

With the help of parent and caregivers, and proper professional care, children CAN keep their teeth for their lifetime!

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