

Tips for Good Oral Health During Infancy

To Keep Child Cavity Free:

- Beginning soon after birth, clean your child's gums daily with a clean, wet washcloth.



- Do not put your child to bed with a bottle. Children should be weaned from a bottle between 12 and 14 months.
- Avoid saliva-sharing activities (sharing utensils, cleaning pacifier in your mouth) as cavity-causing bacteria can be passed from mother to child.



**smear
under age 3**



**pea-size
age 3 and older**

- Once teeth come in, start brushing twice a day with a smear of fluoride toothpaste for children under age 3. For children ages 3 and above, a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste should be used.
- Avoid giving your child foods and drinks containing sugar. Children should not have fruit juice during their first year.
- Lift the child's lip once a month to look for cavities. The child should see a dentist immediately if there are signs of cavities.
- At the one-year well-child visit, ask your doctor about your child's oral health and the use of fluoride.
- Children should have their first dental visit before age 1 or when their first tooth appears in the mouth.

How to Relieve Teething Pain

- Use over-the-counter pain medicine (acetaminophen, ibuprofen) and/or chilled teething rings.
- Do not use teething gels.

Tips on How to Brush a Young Child's Teeth

- Use a small, child-sized toothbrush.
- Lay child down on a comfortable surface (changing table).
- Position yourself behind child's head.
- Give child a toy to hold.
- Brush 2 - 3 teeth at a time.



Early Cavities

Chalky white spots at the gum line that can be reversed with fluoride.



Moderate Cavities

Light brown or dark in color, teeth look chipped.



Severe Cavities

Brown or black in color, teeth appear rotted away or broken.



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