### 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.
- 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.

### 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.

### How to Relieve Teething Pain
- Use over-the-counter pain medicine (acetaminophen, ibuprofen) and/or chilled teething rings.
- Do not use teething gels.

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**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.