

Dental Care For Your Baby

1. Taking care of yourself before the baby arrives.

- a. Eat a balanced diet with the right amounts of protein, vitamins A, C, and D, and minerals like calcium and phosphorous. Ask your physician about taking folic acid instead of folate.
- b. Continue with your regular dental exams, necessary treatment and cleanings. Dental radiographs with an apron are completely safe during pregnancy.
- c. It is important to make sure your mouth is healthy. Mother's decay-causing bacteria can be passed to baby.
- d. Discontinue bleaching teeth until after pregnancy/nursing.
- e. Baby's teeth begin to form in the second month of pregnancy

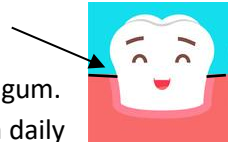
2. "First visit by first birthday". Your child should be seen when their first tooth comes in, usually between 6 months to 1 year. At this visit we will:



- a. Check for decay
- b. Demonstrate and discuss how to take care of your child's teeth
- c. Look for proper mouth development.
- d. Discuss diet, pacifiers and other oral care products.
- e. Determine your family's sources of fluoride.
- f. Discuss caries prevention strategies

3. Caring for your child's teeth.

- a. Use a toothbrush. Cloths do not clean where the tooth meets the gum.
- b. Brush your child's teeth two times a day and floss teeth that touch daily
- c. Assist your child with brushing until they can do a good job (might take 8 years)
- d. Toothpaste – use fluoride toothpaste in the proper amount.
 - i. Before a child can spit well, use a smear of toothpaste (less than a grain of rice)
 - ii. After they can spit well (around age 6), use a pea size amount.



4. General Tips

- a. Avoid saliva-sharing (sharing spoons, cups, placing pacifiers).
- b. Minimize frequency of nighttime feedings with milk, formula, breast milk, or juice.
- c. Limit between-meal snacking.
- d. Finish bottles BEFORE laying children down. Use water only if a child is taking a beverage to bed.
- e. Use WATER ONLY in sippy cups.
- f. Thumb sucking and pacifier use are a normal coping mechanisms until around 9 months.
 - i. Substitute for pacifier with toys that can be chewed on in the molar region.
- g. Avoid use of over-the-counter teething gels due to potential toxicity

