



Baby Teeth are Important

For children from birth to 5 years old

WHY IS DENTAL HEALTH IMPORTANT FOR BABY TEETH?



Bacteria (or germs) begin to grow in the baby's mouth at birth. It is important to start good oral hygiene habits early. Baby teeth need to be strong and healthy for eating, talking, smiling, and holding a place for adult teeth.

HOW DO I CLEAN MY BABY'S MOUTH?

- Wipe your baby's gums in the morning and at night with a clean, damp washcloth.
- Brush at least twice a day with a small, soft toothbrush and **water only**, as soon as your baby's first tooth appears.
- Toothpaste is not recommended for children under 3, unless advised by your dental professional.



EATING AND SLEEPING HABITS CAN AFFECT YOUR CHILD'S DENTAL HEALTH



- If your baby falls asleep while feeding, remove the nipple before placing your baby to sleep in the crib on its back.
- If your baby sleeps with a bottle, **only use water**.
- Give your baby water to drink in a regular plastic cup when they can sit up alone.

DENTAL MILESTONES

- Your baby's first visit to the dentist should occur by their **first birthday**, or **within 6 months of when their first tooth appears**.
- Begin flossing once a day when your child has teeth that are touching.
- At **3 years of age**, you can begin using only a small amount of toothpaste (**pea-size or smaller**). Teach and encourage your child to spit the toothpaste out.

