

Oral health for babies

Baby teeth are important. Baby teeth are placeholders for permanent teeth. When they are decayed, a child may have pain, eating and speech problems, and a poor self-image.

The first year of your baby's life is a great time to practice healthy habits you want to teach your child as he or she grows older.

Baby's healthy mouth checklist:

- Clean your baby's teeth and gums with a clean damp cloth or a small, soft toothbrush after each feeding.
- Check with your doctor or dentist to make sure your baby is getting enough fluoride each day. Fluoride protects teeth from decay.
- Make an appointment for your baby to visit the dentist when the first tooth comes in, and no later than age 1.
- If you put your baby to bed with a bottle, use only plain water.
- Encourage your child to drink from a cup beginning at 6 months of age.
- When your baby begins eating solid foods, choose those without sugar.
- The bacteria that cause cavities can be passed on to your baby from your mouth.
- If you give your baby a pacifier, do not put it in your mouth before giving it to baby.



A beautiful smile begins even before your baby's teeth start to show.

Things I want to do to keep my baby's mouth healthy:

1.

2.

For more information

Oregon Public Health Division
Office of Family Health
Oral Health Program

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/PHD/OFH/ORALHEALTH>
971-673-0348