



# Baby Teeth Care

Birth to 2 years of age

## Why are baby teeth important?

Children use their baby teeth to chew food, learn how to speak, save space for the permanent teeth, make a nice smile, and stay happy and healthy.

## What causes decay in baby teeth?

Tooth decay is caused by a combination of:

- Germs that live in the mouth
- Sugar in our foods
- Not enough fluoride

## How should I clean my baby's teeth?

As soon as the teeth appear in the mouth, clean them twice daily with either a soft, clean washcloth, or a very soft baby toothbrush and a **rice-grain sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.**



## When should I wean my baby from the bottle?

You can begin to teach your baby how to drink from a cup at 6 – 8 months of age. You will have to help the baby hold the cup for several months. By age one, the baby should be completely weaned from the bottle.

## How do I keep my baby's teeth healthy?

- Clean baby's teeth twice every day with rice-grain sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Brush his or her teeth twice every day.
- Take your child to the dentist by age one.
- Limit sugary liquids and foods.

## DON'Ts:

- Don't put your baby to bed with the bottle unless it has only water in it.
- Don't share eating utensils or 'clean' the pacifier with your own mouth.
- Don't 'pre-chew' food.
- Don't dip the pacifier in a sweet liquid or sugar.
- Don't use the bottle as a pacifier.

**Schedule dental visit by the first birthday!**