

# Little teeth. Big responsibility.



Children can suffer from all kinds of oral health problems if they don't take proper care of their teeth. Get on the right path by creating good oral health habits with your baby's very first tooth.

## Bottle battle

Baby Bottle Syndrome is when a baby gets tooth decay caused by bad bottle habits. In fact, Baby Bottle Syndrome is now the number one cause of extensive tooth decay in children under three years of age. The problem usually occurs when a baby falls asleep with a bottle full of milk or juice. The good news is it's easy to avoid Baby Bottle Syndrome. Avoid food at bedtime and try to give your baby a bottle of water before bed instead of milk.

## Fighting flouride

Too much fluoride may lead to **flourosis**, or small white flecks on the teeth. It's usually caused by swallowing too much toothpaste with fluoride in it. According to Dr. Tom McGuire, author of *Tooth Fitness*, children between the ages of two and six swallow about 33% of the toothpaste on the brush, and those between seven and 16 swallow 20%. To avoid flourosis, have your child brush without toothpaste until he or she can brush without swallowing.

## Truth about tooth decay

Even though fewer kids are getting cavities these days, tooth decay remains the single most common chronic disease among children. *Healthy People 2000* shows that 52% of 6- to 8-year-olds have tooth decay. That makes it up to eight times more common than asthma.

## Brush up on good brushing habits

The way you brush is different from how your child should brush. Little kids, especially under the age of four, should brush using the **scrub technique**. It's done by scrubbing the teeth in small circular motions with the bristles of the toothbrush.

## Visit the dentist early and often

The Academy of General Dentistry recommends you take your child to the dentist six months after your child's first teeth erupt. Seeing the dentist early helps detect and prevent cavities and other oral health problems. It also helps parents learn what they can do to help create a lifetime of good oral health for their kids.

**GO YOU**<sup>SM</sup>



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