

## **Baby Teeth Recommendations**

1. Cleaning of the mouth should begin PRIOR to tooth eruption so your child accepts cleaning as part of the daily routine. A toothbrush for infants can be wrapping a moist clean washcloth or cotton pad around a parent's finger for use as a cleaning device.
2. Avoid toothpaste until your child is a year and a half old. After this time, a small amount of toothpaste (a pea-sized drop) may be applied to the toothbrush once a day.
3. Bedtime cleaning is one of the most important so sugar is not left on the teeth during the night when there is decreased production of saliva.
4. Breastfeeding is fine. If you're bottle-feeding, never put your child to bed, daytime nap, or regular nighttime sleep with a bottle containing anything but water. It is recommended to wean your child from the breast or bottle by the first birthday.
5. Fluoride is important in helping to prevent decay in permanent teeth. If your drinking water is fluoridated, encourage your child to drink it. If your drinking water is not fluoridated, ask Dr. Donley about your child's diet and if daily fluoride supplements are indicated.
6. Sucking pacifiers or fingers is natural and a normal desire for infants. It provides security and considerable satisfaction during the first year of life. Most children stop the habit on their own between the ages of 2-5.
7. Dental Checklist for infants and toddlers:

BIRTH TO 6 months:  Clean mouth with gauze after feedings and at bedtime  
 Regulate feeding habits  
 Ask pediatrician or dentist about fluoride supplements

6 months to 1 year:  First tooth should appear. Time to see a dentist for exam  
 Avoid bedtime nursing and bottles with juices, formula or milk  
 Clean teeth with gauze or small bristled brush after feedings/ bedtime  
 Wean baby from breast and bottle by FIRST birthday

1 year to 2 years:  Most teeth have erupted  
 Follow schedule of exams/cleanings recommended by pediatric dentist  
 Watch for dental injuries as child becomes mobile; Have injuries evaluated by a pediatric dentist.  
 Start pea-sized portions of toothpaste with fluoride.



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