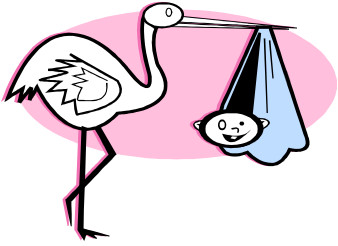


Cavity Free Babies

Many of our young patients have never had a cavity! Here are some hints to help your children to be cavity free too!



Eat Well During Pregnancy:

A baby's teeth begin to form under the gums before they are born, so be sure to eat a balanced diet including plenty of calcium (at least 1200 mg per day). When baby begins to eat on her own, avoid developing a "sweet tooth" by starting with foods that are not sweet, ie use plain cereals, start vegetables before fruits, green beans before peas.

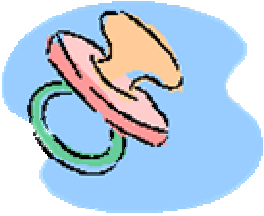
Avoid nursing decay:

Nursing decay is caused by the pooling of milk, formula, or juice around baby's teeth, usually at bedtime or naptime. Do not allow your baby to have a bottle or to nurse for more than ½ hour at a time. If your baby wants a bottle when sleeping it should contain only water. When baby begins to use a sippy cup, juices, formula and milk should be limited to 10-15 minutes...otherwise the cup should contain only water...**Do not give soda pop to a baby!**



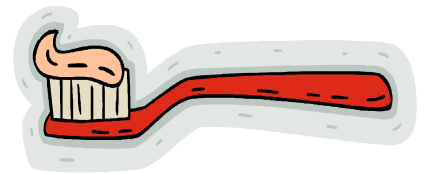
Pacifiers:

Many children develop serious bite problems from sucking on their thumb, fingers or a pacifier. If your baby needs this extra sucking, try to get her to use a binky, rather than the thumb. You and baby will find it much easier to break this habit. Keep the binky clean and never dip it in sugar, honey or other sweeteners before use. It is important that you choose a pacifier with holes (to allow for air flow if swallowed), and a curved shape that won't flatten baby's face. We encourage you discontinue use around 15-18 months.



Brushing:

Baby teeth can develop cavities as soon as they appear (usually between 6 and 10 months). To help prevent this, daily cleaning can be accomplished by wiping them with a damp washcloth. Later, use a soft-bristled child's toothbrush. For ease of cleaning, sit cross-legged on the floor with your little one's head in your lap (feet pointing away), or as your child grows, sit on a chair with your child standing in front of you-facing away. Lean their head back into your lap. When they open, you will be able to see all the teeth. Being careful not to elicit a gag response, gently brush all tooth surfaces. Use non-fluoridated toothpaste until baby can spit out the excess. Flossing can be achieved in this same manner. Try to make this a fun game.



Fluoride greatly reduces the risk for cavities:

Fluoride in your baby's drinking water incorporates into the developing teeth to make them decay resistant. If you are in an area that does not have fluoridated water you should use **nursery water** that contains fluoride to make your baby's formula and for drinking. With the new fluorides, your baby can begin having dental fluoride treatments as soon as their teeth appear, reducing decay even more.

