



### Healthy Teeth



### Tooth decay



Chalky white lines may be the start of tooth decay



Tooth decay along gum-line



Severe tooth decay

## Brush-up on Baby Teeth

*Keep baby teeth healthy until they fall out naturally.*

Baby teeth are important for making speech sounds, guiding adult teeth into place, eating and jaw development.

*How do you keep your child's teeth healthy?*

- An adult brushes my child's teeth morning and night.
- My child's teeth are brushed with a rice-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. *(see picture on other side)*
- My child uses a lidless, regular cup.
- I offer my child a variety of healthy foods with 2-3 snacks a day of foods that do not stick to teeth.
- I offer my child water for thirst between meals and offer other drinks at mealtime and snack times.
- Once a month I lift my child's lip and check for new teeth or signs of tooth decay.
- My child's first dental visit is around age one.

*Note:* Children born prematurely with a very low birth weight (less than 3 lbs or 1500g) or who take medications containing sugar are at a greater risk for developing tooth decay.

Early childhood tooth decay is a serious disease that destroys baby teeth. It causes pain, infection and problems eating, sleeping, learning and growing. **Help your child have a lifetime of healthy smiles.**

## Help your baby have a healthy smile

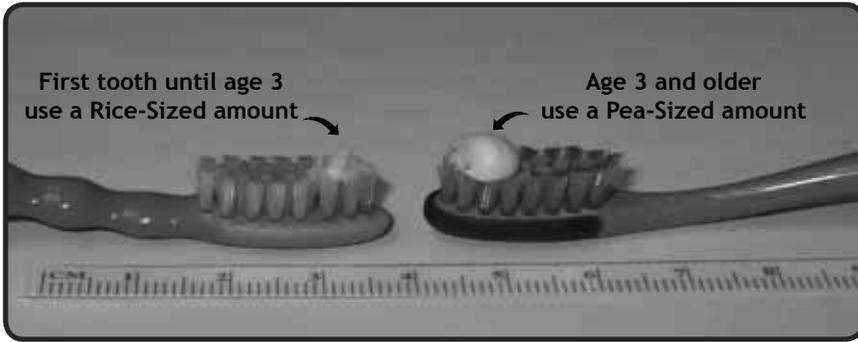


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*Brush  
with fluoride toothpaste  
everyday!*

### Baby's dental health linked to Mother's

Research shows that if mom has tooth decay, the bacteria get passed to baby. Siblings and other caregivers can pass this bacteria to baby too. **Avoid sharing items that go in the mouth such as spoons, toothbrushes, toys and water bottles.**



*Contact us to learn more.*

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### TOOTH BRUSHING: What to do When Baby Won't Cooperate

*The key is to start early and make it fun for your baby.*

- ★ Begin as soon as the first tooth appears.
- ★ Pick a time of day that works well for both you and your child. Make it part of your daily routine.
- ★ Your child learns by watching you. Be a role model and brush your teeth too!
- ★ Bath time can be a good time to clean baby's teeth.
- ★ Brushing to music, singing a song or telling a story can make it more fun.
- ★ Play games like "Where are the plaque bugs hiding?" and then look for them with the toothbrush.
- ★ Try a different flavour of toothpaste. Many children find mint or cinnamon flavouring too 'hot'.

#### Recommended Resources

- ★ BC Dental Association - Your Dental Health  
<http://bcdental.org/yourdentalhealth/>
- ★ Baby's Best Chance (book) available at public health offices or online  
<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/women-and-children/womens-and-maternal/parent-publications.html>
- ★ HealthLinkBC Files [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca)
- ★ Health Canada (*Healthy Living/Oral Health*)  
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/oral-bucco/index-eng.php>
- ★ Healthy Families <http://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca>