



Baby Bottle Tooth Decay



It is important for your baby's teeth to be healthy even though they are going to be replaced by permanent teeth in the future.

Your baby needs strong and healthy teeth to chew their food, talk, and have a nice smile. Baby bottle tooth decay means that your baby's teeth have cavities, which are small holes in the outer part of the teeth, the enamel.

Tooth decay can start as soon as the teeth start growing in your baby's mouth.

What causes baby bottle tooth decay?

Many things can cause baby bottle tooth decay. One of the more common causes is when the baby's teeth are in frequent and continued contact with drinks that contain a lot of sugar.

Tooth decay can begin with cavity-causing bacteria being passed on to the baby from the mother or another caregiver. The bacteria are passed through saliva, for example when the mother or caregiver puts the baby's feeding spoon in their mouth and then feeds the baby with the same spoon.

Common drinks that can cause baby bottle tooth decay when they are in contact with the teeth for too long are:

-  Formula
-  Dairy milk
-  Breast milk
-  Juice
-  Sweetened water

What causes baby bottle tooth decay?



Try not to share saliva with the baby.

For example, avoid sharing spoons with the baby.



Try to have your child drink from a cup by their first birthday.



Do not put your baby to sleep with a bottle or sippy cup.



Do not use a bottle or sippy cup as a pacifier when the baby is crying or fussy.



Schedule your baby's first trip to the dentist by their first birthday.



From 3 to 6 years old, brush your baby's teeth with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.



Make sure to supervise your child as they brush their teeth.

Supervise until they are able to spit out the tooth paste without swallowing it – this usually happens around age 6 or 7.



Wipe your child's gums with a washcloth or a clean, damp gauze after each meal.



Gently brush your baby's teeth with a baby toothbrush twice a day with fluoride tooth paste the size of a grain of rice until the age of 3.