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**tips for healthy
baby teeth**



Australian Dental Association

Your child's first or primary teeth are as important as permanent teeth and require daily care. Here are some tips for your child's dental health:

- 1** Children can get Early Childhood Caries (ECC). Without treatment, this can lead to toothache, infection and early loss of teeth.
- 2** The risk of ECC can be increased by settling the baby to sleep with breast milk or by using a nursing bottle of milk, sweetened flavoured milk, fruit juice or cordial, especially if you do it often and for long periods.
- 3** High sugar diets and the lack of good brushing and flossing increase the chance of ECC. Fluoridated water helps to decrease the risk of ECC but don't use fluoride toothpaste until your child is 18 months of age and then use child-strength until age six.
- 4** Take your baby to the dentist for a check up within six months of the eruption of their first tooth or by their first birthday. You will receive the advice you need to avoid ECC.
- 5** Signs that a primary tooth is about to appear include frequent crying, a slight fever, reddened cheeks and drooling, sucking or gnawing on toys, appetite loss and upset stomach.
- 6** Sucking is a natural reflex in babies and young children. Pacifier (dummy) and thumb or finger sucking usually stops between the ages of two and four. Your dentist can give you helpful advice regarding oral habits.
- 7** Children will tend to imitate their parents' behaviours. If good nutrition, oral hygiene and dental care are important to you, they will become important to your child. Actively supervise children's cleaning until about age 10.



Please see the Australian Dental Association Inc. website
www.ada.org.au for further information.