Dental health

Healthy baby teeth are important for your baby's overall health. Pain and infection from tooth decay can make it hard for your baby to sleep, chew, and grow normally. They make it difficult for your baby to concentrate and learn.

Baby teeth also help to shape your child's face and guide adult teeth into place. They're worth taking care of! Start early to keep your baby cavity free for life.

Dental care

Before the teeth come in:

Clean the inside of your baby's mouth once a day.

- Wash your hands.
- Wrap a clean damp facecloth around your finger.
- Wipe the inside of baby's mouth and around the gums.

Added info...

Germs that cause cavities can pass from your mouth to your baby. To protect your baby, take care of your own dental health.

Keep your own teeth and mouth clean. You will set a good example for your baby and there will be fewer cavity-causing germs in your mouth to pass along.

After the first tooth comes in:

- *Every morning and before going to bed at night,* let your baby chew on a soft-bristled toothbrush with a small smear of fluoride toothpaste. Be sure he's sitting or standing still.

- *When the baby's done, gently brush her teeth and gums.* You don't need to use more toothpaste. When you brush, lay your baby in a safe position. You need to be able to support your baby's head so you can see her teeth clearly. Your hands should be clean and free to open your baby's mouth and do the brushing.

- **Check for signs of tooth decay.** When you brush your baby's teeth, lift up the lips and look at the front and back teeth. If you notice brown or white spots on your baby's teeth, call a dentist right away. This may be the first sign of decay.

If you don't have a dentist, ask your friends and family for suggestions or check the yellow pages.

CAUTION!

Keep toothpaste out of children's reach.

Loving Care

Birth to 6 Months

2010

NOVA SCOTIA

**Health Promotion
and Protection**

Public Health Services

www.gov.ns.ca/HPP

Aussi disponible en français