

## Early Childhood Tooth Decay is Painful

### Tooth Pain Affects:

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Learning
- Behaviour

### Pulling Baby Teeth Because of Decay Causes Problems With:

- Chewing Food
- Speaking
- Crooked Adult Teeth
- General Health
- Self-Esteem



Advanced Early Childhood  
Tooth Decay  
[www.ada.org.public/topics/  
decay\\_childhood.asp](http://www.ada.org.public/topics/decay_childhood.asp)

## Dentally Appropriate Healthy Snacks

- Cheese & crackers
- Milk
- Yogurt
- Fruit & vegetables
- Bannock/whole grain bread
- Ham, beef or chicken sandwich
- Unsweetened applesauce
- Non-sugar coated cereal
- Unsweetened rice cakes
- Hard boiled egg\*

CAUTION: Some of these foods may be a choking or allergy\* hazard for young children. Texture of foods may need to be changed for younger children. (ie-cook and grate or slice hard raw vegetables and fruit, cut grapes in half, grate cheese, etc) Check with a physician, nurse or nutritionist if you are unsure.

### Dental Services in Your Community:

Healthy Smile Happy Child Project  
Manitoba 2007. Revised September 2011.



## Tooth Care (& Mouth Care) Starts at Birth



▶ Newborn to  
6 Years

Prevent Early Childhood Tooth Decay

# ▶ Tooth Saving Tips!



- Breastfeed
- Give breastfed babies a Vitamin D supplement
- No bottle in bed\*
- Brush baby's teeth
- Avoid letting baby walk around with a bottle or sippy cup
- Wean baby off the bottle to a sippy cup around 6-8 months
- Wean baby off the sippy cup onto a regular cup by 12-14 months
- Limit unsweetened juice to 1/2 cup a day and dilute with water
- No juice, pop or sweet drinks in bottle or sippy cup: use a regular cup
- Serve healthy food and drinks
- Avoid propping baby's bottle
- Give water in between meals
- Don't dip baby's soother in sweets
- Use teething ring instead of biscuits
- *Take your child to the dentist regularly starting by their 1st birthday.*
- \* **Only water is safe in a bedtime bottle.**

## Mouth Care From the Start

Start cleaning baby's gums right after birth. Wipe them twice a day with a clean, and damp washcloth.

This habit makes toothbrushing easier later on because baby is used to you working in his or her mouth.

### Brush Baby Teeth

- Brush your baby's teeth twice a day as soon as the first tooth appears, especially before bed
- Children from birth to 3 years of age: ask your dental professional if your child is at risk for tooth decay\*
  - *If child is at risk*, use a small amount (the size of a **grain of rice**) of fluoride toothpaste
- Children from 3 to 6 years of age: use a **green pea-sized** amount of toothpaste
- Too much toothpaste can cause permanent white spots on adult teeth: caregivers should put toothpaste on toothbrush
- Children need help brushing their teeth until they are 8 years old

\* **A child may be at risk of early childhood tooth decay if the child:** is living in an area with non-fluoridated water, has white chalky areas or cavities, has lots of sugary snacks/ drinks between meals, teeth are not brushed daily, or caregiver has tooth decay.

## Lift the Lip!



Decay along the gumline  
[www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hecomm/oral/liftlip.htm](http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/hecomm/oral/liftlip.htm)

Lift the top lip at least once a month to check for decay.

Lift the top lip and check the gumline. Decay often starts there and can't be seen when your child smiles.

Decay looks like white, brown or discolored areas on the teeth, often along the gumline.

Check **behind** the top front teeth as well (you can use a dental mirror if you like-available at most drugstores).



A **rice grain-sized** amount of toothpaste

A **pea-sized** amount of toothpaste