

Dental Caries

Cavities are the most common infection seen in children. Cavities are formed when the tooth enamel is eroded by acid produced by germs and sugary substances. Prevention is relatively simple but the complications from tooth decay can be devastating. Children can suffer pain, poor school performance and eating problems. Tooth decay can start with the first teeth so good dental habits at an early age is worth the effort.

Children should have their first visit with a dentist by 2 years of age. Prior to the first tooth, parents can get in the habit of wiping the gums with a clean washcloth. After the first tooth appears, parents may begin brushing teeth twice a day with a soft bristled baby toothbrush and fluoride-free toothpaste. At 2 years of age, you may begin to use a fluoride toothpaste. Until 6 years of age, your child will likely need help with brushing his teeth.

Besides regular cleaning, there are several things parents can do to prevent dental caries.

- Limit sugary drinks such as soda and juices.
- Eliminate nighttime bottles or only use only water at night.
- Avoid sugary or sticky snacks.
- Have regular dental check-ups at least once a year.
- Model good dental hygiene in front of your kids.



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