

## Early Childhood Tooth Decay is Painful

### Tooth Pain Affects:

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Learning
- Behaviour

### Pulling Baby Teeth Too Early 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.

### Contact Information for Dental Services in Your Community:

Healthy Smile Happy Child  
Manitoba 2007. Revised May 2014

**Baby Teeth Are Important**

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



▶ **Newborn to  
6 Years**

Prevent Early Childhood Tooth Decay

# ▶ Tooth Saving Tips!



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

## Mouth Care From the Start

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

### Brush Baby Teeth

- Brush your baby's teeth twice a day as soon as the first tooth appears, especially before bed
- For 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
  - *If child is not at risk*, only use water
- For children from 3 to 6 years of age: use a **green pea-sized** amount of toothpaste
- Children need help brushing their teeth until they are 8 years old



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

A **pea-sized** amount of toothpaste

Picture derived from: [http://www.cda-adc.ca/\\_files/position\\_statements/Fluorides-English-2010-06-08.pdf](http://www.cda-adc.ca/_files/position_statements/Fluorides-English-2010-06-08.pdf)

\* **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)

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**Take your child to see a dental professional by their 1st birthday.**

