

# Mouth Care for the Young Child



## Questions and Answers

### **When should my child start to brush?**

You should start to clean your baby's mouth soon after birth. Using a clean, damp cloth, gently wipe the gums. This will remove germs and prepare your child for tooth brushing.

### **How can I brush my child's teeth?**

While your child is still very young, have them lie in your lap. Start to use a soft baby toothbrush as soon as teeth come in.

### **When do baby teeth start to grow?**

Baby teeth start to come in *around* 6 months of age. All 20 baby teeth should be in the mouth between the age of 2 and 3. While teething, your child may be grumpy and drool a lot. Teething should **not** cause fever or diarrhea. Any time your young child has a fever call your doctor.

### **Do I need to use toothpaste?**

You can use water or toothpaste with **no** fluoride until your child can spit (3 to 4 years old). If your child is at risk of developing cavities, a dentist or dental hygienist may recommend the use of a very small amount of toothpaste-about the size of a grain of rice. This can be discussed with a dental professional at your next visit. Once your child is able to spit properly, he/she should brush with fluoridated tooth paste (about the size of a green pea).

### **My child likes to brush by himself.**

Children must brush twice a day and will need your help with this at least once during the day until they are about 8 or 9 years old. Around the age of 2 your child will want to copy you and should be allowed to try brushing, however, it is important for you to assist with the brushing.

### **When should I take my child to the dentist?**

Your child should visit the dentist by the age of 1 year.

You may call the WRHA clinic: Machray School Clinic 940-2090