

## Q&A: Baby Bottle Tooth Decay

### Q: What is baby bottle tooth decay?

A: Baby bottle tooth decay, also known as early childhood caries, or baby bottle caries, is a dental condition in which there is significant decay in a child's teeth. It often occurs when a young child naps or goes to bed at night with a bottle filled with a sugary liquid, such as milk or juice. When bacteria on the teeth come into contact with sugar from the liquids, the bacteria form acids that attack teeth enamel. This causes tooth decay.

### Q: What are the signs of baby bottle tooth decay?

A: Decay is commonly found in the upper front teeth. While each child may experience decay differently, signs may include white spots or brown areas on the teeth.

### Q: How can I prevent baby bottle tooth decay?

A: Here are some suggestions to keep your child's teeth healthy:

- Do not allow your child to go to bed with a bottle filled with anything but water.
- Wean your child from the bottle between 12 and 14 months of age.
- Follow the appropriate oral health routine for your child's age. Wipe your baby's gums after each feeding. When your child's first tooth appears, it's time to begin brushing. Clean and massage gums in areas that remain toothless, and begin flossing when all the baby teeth have erupted, usually by age 2 or 2.5.
- If you live in an area without fluoridated water, talk with your child's dentist about fluoride supplementation.
- Take your child to the dentist within six months of the eruption of his first tooth and no later than your child's first birthday.
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- See more at:

<http://oralhealth.deltadental.com/InfantToddler/ToothDecay/22,21519#sthash.GvTQVaSW.dpuf>