

## HOW MUCH

### Toothpaste with Fluoride?



Under Age 2:  
Slight smear about the size of a grain of rice



Age 2-5:  
Pea-size amount

**It is best to spit and not rinse after brushing.**

Toothbrush images under license from the Calgary Health Region™.

### Juice\*?



Under 6 months:  
No Juice



Infants over 6 months and toddlers:

4-6 ounces a day, BUT not as a pacifying drink



Older children and adolescents:

2 servings a day, 6 ounces per serving

\*Recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

## WHAT CAUSES CAVITIES?

**Bacteria (germs) cause cavities.**



◆ The germs that cause cavities spread easily from one family member to another.



◆ Germs feed on sugars in sweetened drinks and foods. Germs form plaque and acid.



◆ Plaque is a sticky substance that forms on your teeth after eating. ("Fuzzy teeth" = plaque!) Acid in the plaque irritates the gums and makes them red and swollen. Acid also weakens tooth enamel - the protective white outer layer of a tooth.

◆ An acid attack lasts about 20 to 40 minutes. A new acid attack begins with every sip or bite of a sugary food or drink. Frequent snacking or sipping means all day acid attacks.



**OUCH!**



◆ Frequent acid attacks weaken tooth enamel. Cavities form when the acid eats a hole in tooth enamel.

Parents with good oral health are more likely to have healthy babies with good oral health.

**TO KEEP TEETH HEALTHY:**

- ◆ Brush twice a day for 2 minutes.
- ◆ Use a toothpaste that has fluoride.
- ◆ Have regular dental checkups.
- ◆ Limit snacks between meals.
- ◆ Restrict sugary food and drinks to mealtime only.

If you want to know more about keeping your child's teeth healthy, contact the:

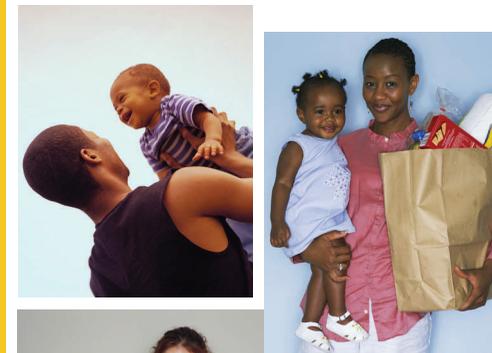
Office of Oral Health  
Family Health Administration  
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
201 W. Preston Street, 3rd Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
(410) 767-5300  
oralhealth@dhmh.state.md.us  
<http://fha.maryland.gov/oralhealth/>



The services and facilities of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) are operated on a nondiscriminatory basis. This policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, or national origin and applies to the provisions of employment and granting of advantages, privileges and accommodations.

The Department, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, ensures that qualified individuals with disabilities are given an opportunity to participate in and benefit from DHMH services, benefits, and employment opportunities.

## Oral Health and Your Young Child



Some Healthy Tips from Maryland's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene



Martin O'Malley, Governor  
Anthony G. Brown, Lieutenant Governor  
Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary



**Good oral health begins before the first tooth appears.**

- ◆ Once a month, lift the lip.
- ◆ Schedule dental visit by the first birthday, then every 6 months.
- ◆ Ask about fluoride varnish.
- ◆ Drink water between meals and limit sweet snacks and drinks to mealtime only.
- ◆ Brush with toothpaste that has fluoride twice a day for at least 2 minutes and supervise brushing until the child is 7-8 years old.

## Birth to 6 months

- ◆ **Baby teeth are important!** Tooth decay causes infection and pain. A clean and germ-free mouth is a healthy place for teeth to grow.
- ◆ **Good dental health starts before the first tooth appears.** After feedings, wipe your baby's gums with a clean damp washcloth.
- ◆ **The germs that cause cavities spread from person to person.**
  - Clean pacifiers with warm soapy water, not with your mouth.
  - Avoid sharing spoons and cups.
  - Do not share pacifiers with other babies.
- ◆ **Only put breast milk, formula or plain water in a bottle.** Sweet drinks like juice, sports drinks and soda have sugar. Avoid dipping pacifiers in sugar or honey.
- ◆ **Baby teeth help your child talk, eat and grow.** The first baby tooth appears around 6 months.

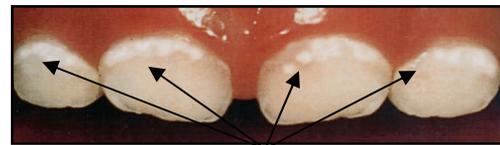


## 6 months to 1 year

- ◆ **Brush your baby's teeth with fluoride toothpaste.** Place a slight smear (about the size of a grain of rice) on the toothbrush and brush two times a day. Brush after breakfast and before bed. Putting your baby's head in your lap may make it easier to brush.
- ◆ **Put your baby to bed with hugs and love, not a bottle.** Sleeping with a bottle of milk, formula, juice or any sugary drink can cause cavities.



- ◆ **Once a month, lift the lip.** White or brown spots along the gum line may be signs that cavities are forming. Contact your baby's dentist or medical provider if you see anything unusual.



*White spots along the gum line are the beginning of tooth decay. Visit the baby's medical doctor or dentist now and ask about fluoride varnish to help stop the decay process.*

## 1 year to 2 years

- ◆ **Schedule the first dental visit by the first birthday.** If you do not yet have a dentist, ask your medical provider to check the baby's teeth. See a dentist if cavities are seen or suspected.
- ◆ **Wean your toddler off the bottle.** Teach your toddler to drink from a regular cup or glass instead of a sippy cup.
- ◆ **Rethink the drink.** Give your child milk or water and limit the amount of 100% fruit juice to 4-6 ounces per day with meals. Avoid giving other sweetened drinks like soda, sports drinks and sweetened juices.
- ◆ **Brush your child's teeth twice a day with a smear of toothpaste that has fluoride.**
- ◆ **Ask about fluoride varnish.** Fluoride varnish is a protective coating that is painted on teeth to help prevent new cavities and stop small cavities that are just starting.
- ◆ **Schedule dental checkups every six months.**



## 2 years to 5 years

- ◆ **Baby teeth are important!** Baby teeth hold space for permanent teeth. All 20 baby teeth are usually in place by 3 years of age. Some baby teeth are meant to last until age 12!
- ◆ **Begin teaching your child to brush their own teeth.** Use a pea-size amount of toothpaste with fluoride. Brush twice a day for at least two minutes. It is best to spit and not rinse after brushing. Supervise brushing until ages 7-8.
- ◆ **Eat well.** Give your child healthy snacks like cheese, vegetable sticks and fresh fruit. Keep sweet foods like cakes, pastries and candy for special treats, not everyday.
- ◆ **Schedule dental checkups every six months.**
- ◆ **Know your child's risk of getting cavities.** Children with poor toothbrushing habits, who snack frequently on sugary foods and drinks, and who have family members with untreated cavities have the highest risk.

