

## **BABY BOTTLE TOOTH DECAY**

Baby's teeth are susceptible to decay or cavities as soon as they appear. By the time the decay is noticed, it may be too late to save the teeth. Decay in infants and young children is known as Baby Bottle Tooth Decay.

### **THE GOOD NEWS IS: BABY BOTTLE TOOTH DECAY IS PREVENTABLE!**

- **What is baby bottle tooth decay and how does it happen?**
  1. Baby bottle tooth decay is a dental condition that can destroy the teeth of an infant or young child.
  2. It occurs when a child's teeth are frequently exposed to sugary liquids like milk, breast milk, formula or juice for long or frequent periods of time.
  
- **Can all the teeth be affected?**
  1. The most common teeth damaged are the upper front teeth but other's can be also.
  2. The first baby teeth are important in helping your child learn to chew food, speak clearly, and look attractive.
  3. Decay in the primary teeth can cause pain, and may affect your child's permanent teeth.
  4. It's not just what children drink, but how often and how long the teeth are exposed to the liquids.
  5. Especially harmful is frequently offering a bottle or sippy cup during naps or nighttime.
  6. During sleep, saliva decreases allowing liquids to pool around the teeth for long periods, and greatly increasing the risk of tooth decay.
  
- **What can parents do to prevent baby bottle tooth decay?**
  1. **Never** allow your child to fall asleep breast-feeding, with a bottle or cup filled with milk, juice, formula or sweet liquids.
  2. **Never** offer a pacifier dipped in sugar or honey.
  3. **Offer** him water or a clean pacifier for bedtime.
  4. Begin to brush your child's teeth as soon as the first one appears and after snacks, meals and especially at bedtime.
  5. Schedule your child's first dental visit early (1-3 yrs) to establish a positive relationship with the dentist.
  6. Check your child's teeth regularly and watch for white spots, or stained teeth.

### **CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY TIPS**

1. Infants should be placed in rear-facing seats until they are at least 1 year of age, **and** weigh 20-22 lbs.
2. If less than a year old and more than 20-22 lbs, be sure they ride in a seat approved for heavier babies and continue to ride rear-facing until 1 year of age. Children may ride in many rear-facing seats, weighing as much as 35 lbs.
3. **NEVER** place a rear-facing safety seat in the front passenger seat of a car especially those with passenger airbags.
4. Once children are forward facing, they should ride in a forward-facing seat until they reach 40 lbs. Again, never in the front passenger seat.
5. All children who have outgrown child safety seats should be properly restrained in booster seats in the back seat until at least 8 years old, and less than 4'9" (57 in) tall.
6. Old/used child safety seats should not be used unless you are certain they have never been in a crash and you have all the parts. Seats which are six years or older should be thrown away and never used. To check if your seat has been recalled, log on to [www.seatcheck.org](http://www.seatcheck.org)
7. **ALWAYS** read both the vehicle owners' manual and the instructions that come with the child safety seat.
8. Children of all ages are safest when properly restrained in the *back* seat. Children 12 years old and younger should not sit in the front seat of cars with passenger side air bags.
9. **REMEMBER** the "best" child safety seat is the one that appropriately fits the child, vehicle, and is used correctly every time.

### **GET YOUR CHILD SAFETY SEATS CHECKED**

**Get a free child safety seat inspection:  
1-866-SEAT-CHECK  
WWW.SEATCHECK.ORG**