

**A lifetime of smiles begins at birth.**

Chewing

Looks

Healthy adult teeth.

Overall health.



Paul R. LePage, Governor

Mary C. Mayhew, Commissioner

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## **Taking Care of Your Baby's Teeth**



**For Parents of Children  
Ages Birth to 3 Years Old**

**A lifetime of smiles begins at birth.**



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## Keep your baby's gums healthy.

You're in charge - your baby health depends on you. Wipe your baby's gums at least once a day with a damp washcloth to remove the plaque, more often if possible.



**First teeth:** for most babies these are the first teeth. They arrive around 6-9 months old. Most babies have all their teeth by the time they are 2 years old.

**Teething:** can be quite painful for your child.

Some way to ease the pain: rub the baby's gums gently with your **clean** finger; give the baby a cold teething ring or cool, **clean** washcloth to chew on; keep your baby's teeth healthy. When they start to appear, brush them with a soft, child-sized toothbrush. Wipe the gums with a **clean** damp washcloth.



**Fluoride:** plays an important part in your baby's dental health. Your baby should have fluoride to help prevent cavities and make teeth stronger. Ask your dentist or doctor about fluoride drops.

## Prevent baby bottle tooth decay.

Doctors don't think it's a good idea to put a baby to bed with a bottle or a sippy cup.



If you decide to do this, be sure that the bottle or sippy cup only has water in it. Liquids with sugar, like milk, and apple juice, can cause tooth decay when the baby falls asleep with a bottle in their mouth.

## Check for early signs of decay.



If you see brown stains or soft spots on the outer surface of the teeth, contact your dentist.



### Remember to:

- ◇ Wipe baby's gums once a day.
- ◇ Brush the teeth as soon as they come in.
- ◇ Ask your doctor or dentist about fluoride drops, especially if you have well water or unfluoridated town water.
- ◇ If you have to give your baby a bottle or a sippy cup at nap or bed time, fill it only with water.
- ◇ Check the mouth for early signs of decay.
- ◇ Limit sweets and sweet drinks.