

# Baby Teeth Are Important!



## Tooth Decay is Preventable:

- ▶ Eat well and take special care of your teeth during pregnancy.
- ▶ Begin baby's oral care the 1<sup>st</sup> week.
- ▶ Wipe baby's gums daily from birth, then brush teeth twice daily once present.
- ▶ Ensure baby has swallowed all breastmilk\* before lying down. Gums and teeth should **always** be cleaned before bedtime.
- ▶ Lift the lips monthly to check teeth. If changes are noticed, contact a dental professional.

Severe decay can affect your child's health.

**A first dental visit is recommended by baby's first birthday.**

*\*If you have made the informed decision to formula feed, these recommendations also apply to your baby.*

### Did You Know?

Oral health affects our overall health. Healthy baby teeth are necessary for good nutrition, speech development, and self-esteem.

# Signs of Early Childhood Tooth Decay (ECTD)

- ★ ECTD initially appears as white chalky areas at the gum line
- ★ It can progress to brown spots on enamel
- ★ Top front teeth usually show signs first



**HEALTHY TEETH**



**MILD DECAY**



**MODERATE DECAY**



**SEVERE DECAY**

## Did You Know?

Cavity causing bacteria can be transferred to your baby through saliva. Cutlery, soothers, food and drinks should not be shared.

## Toddler Care

- ★ Water is the best choice between meals.
- ★ Start using open faced cup between 9-12 months.
- ★ At age 2, brush twice daily with a rice-sized smear of toothpaste with fluoride.



For more information,  
call the Health Action Line  
**1-800-660-5853**  
or visit our website  
[www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org)