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4 Tips for Great Infant Oral Care

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Your baby might not have any teeth yet, but infant oral care is a must if you want to reduce the chances of cavities later on—and it should start the day they're born. Simply getting your child used to having their mouth cleaned is a critical start. Learn four tips on how to provide excellent newborn oral care for your little one!

How Do I Clean my Baby's Gums?

Although you don't have to use a toothbrush or toothpaste until the first tooth pops up, cleaning the gums after feeding will remove bacteria and sugar from the mouth, and you do want them to get used to that process. To clean your **baby's gums**, wrap a clean, damp washcloth around your finger and gently rub the gums with it.

What Can I Do to Reduce the Spread of Bacteria to My Baby?

Another part of infant oral care is being careful about what goes into your baby's mouth. Bacteria causes tooth decay and cavities and is therefore considered an infection. Cut down on the spread of bacteria with these helpful tips:

1. Try not to share anything that's been in your mouth, such as utensils or toothbrushes
2. Rinse pacifiers and bottle nipples with water, not saliva
3. Avoid testing food or drinks before feeding them

How Do I Care for Their First Teeth?

Once your child gets that **first tooth**, it's time to break out the soft-bristled toothbrush and a tiny amount of toothpaste. Pick a fluoride-free



teeth. Use a baby sized toothbrush made to fit comfortably in a smaller mouth.

Get in the habit of brushing your baby's teeth twice daily from the moment their first tooth appears. Gently brush the tooth with the toothbrush, making sure you get all sides and the gums surrounding it. Once multiple teeth are present, you can start flossing to remove debris that can get stuck between adjacent teeth. Although these baby teeth fall out in time, it's important to take good care of them so they don't fall out prematurely. Healthy baby teeth mark the space where the permanent teeth will reside while helping your child learn to chew and pronounce words correctly.

What Should I Expect for My Baby's First Dental Visit?

The first few teeth to come in also help mark the first visit to the dentist. Consider seeing a pediatric dentist who's specially trained in the care of a child's mouth. Your baby's first dental visit is also an excellent opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have. If you're unsure if you're brushing your baby's teeth correctly or want to know what to expect when it comes to teething, this first visit is the time to ask them.

Infant oral care is just the beginning of a lifelong habit of good dental hygiene. If you ever face problems with caring for your baby's teeth, the dentist is there for you, but being prepared will make each visit as easy as the last.

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