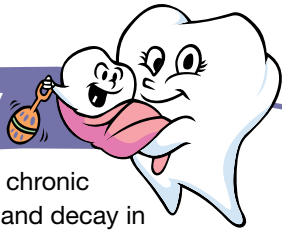


## Protect your baby from the germs that cause tooth decay

Be careful not to put things – food, pacifiers, utensils – in your mouth and then in your baby’s mouth. Many parents “clean” pacifiers by putting them in their mouths and then giving them back to their babies, but cavity-causing germs are easily passed to infants and toddlers this way. Germs can also be shared when parents test food or share utensils with their child. No matter how careful you are, your baby will get some of your germs, so keeping the germs down by taking care of YOUR oral health is important.

### *Baby Teeth Are Important!*



Dental disease is the most common chronic disease of early childhood. Cavities and decay in baby teeth can also spread to permanent teeth, causing painful and costly damage. **BUT YOU CAN PREVENT THIS!** Regular preventive care and a healthy diet can help prevent decay. Also, remember to schedule your child for an oral health screening by her first birthday.

#### *Healthy baby teeth:*

- Allow your child to chew and eat properly
- Help your child speak clearly
- Shape your baby’s face
- Guide adult teeth into place

#### *Dental decay in baby teeth affects your child’s overall health.*

- Cavities can be painful
- Cavities can interfere with your child’s ability to eat well
- Dental disease can affect your child’s overall health and development

## Here Come the Baby Teeth

### Preparing for your child’s first tooth

Teething usually starts around 6 months of age, and most children have all 20 of their baby teeth by age 3. Recording baby teeth as they come in is a great way to keep track of your baby’s development. *On page 36 of this booklet you will find a chart that you can use to record your child’s teeth as they come in.*

### Signs of teething

- Drooling and fussiness.
- You may be able to feel or even see teeth pushing in under your child’s gums.

### Comforting your teething baby

- Offer a cold, firm, safe and clean teething object, like a teething ring or slightly frozen damp washcloth. Rub your child’s gums gently with a clean finger.
- Clean your baby’s teeth and gums with a soft, clean, cool damp cloth if a soft toothbrush is uncomfortable.

*“Henry started crying a lot at about 6 months. At first I was worried something was wrong. When I realized it was his teeth coming in, a cold teething ring was all he needed to make us both feel better.”*

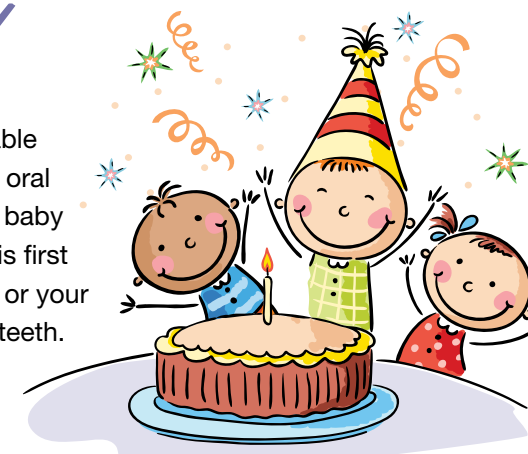
*– Sarah, Seattle, WA*



# First Oral Health Check-up by First Birthday

## Tooth decay is preventable

You know tooth decay is preventable with a healthy diet and good daily oral care. But that is not enough. Your baby also needs an oral screening by his first birthday. Ask your family's dentist or your baby's doctor to check his or her teeth.



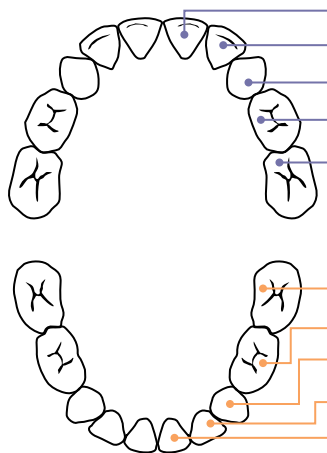
*"I see babies every day for well-child visits and talk with parents about ways to keep their babies healthy. Moms are sometimes surprised to hear me talk about the importance of preventing tooth decay at such an early age. Yet, good oral health is critical for a child's overall health."*

- Dr. Russell, doctor, Yakima, WA

## Keeping Track

When baby teeth start coming in, it's a good idea to track the arrival of each tooth. You can track the arrival of your child's baby teeth using the chart printed on page 36 of this booklet.

Be sure to let your dentist know if you have any concerns about how your child's baby teeth are coming in.



Baby Teeth			
Upper Teeth	Come In	Fall Out	
Central Incisor	8 – 12 mos.	6 – 7 years	
Lateral Incisor	9 – 13 mos.	7 – 8 years	
Canine (cuspid)	16 – 22 mos.	10 – 12 years	
First Molar	13 – 19 mos.	9 – 11 years	
Second Molar	22 – 33 mos.	10 – 12 years	

Baby Teeth			
Lower Teeth	Come In	Fall Out	
Second Molar	23 – 31 mos.	10 – 12 years	
First Molar	14 – 18 mos.	9 – 11 years	
Canine (cuspid)	17 – 23 mos.	9 – 12 years	
Lateral Incisor	10 – 16 mos.	7 – 8 years	
Central Incisor	6 – 10 mos.	6 – 7 years	