



LESSON:
GIVE YOU AND YOUR
BABY A LIFETIME OF
HEALTHY TEETH



Simple Ways To Care For YOUR BABY'S TEETH AND GUMS

Taking good care of your baby's mouth now can help them have a lifetime of strong, healthy teeth. Here is a guide to caring for your baby's teeth - even if you can't see them yet!

BEFORE TEETH EMERGE:

Babies' mouths can contain bacteria that may harm their teeth when they begin to come in.

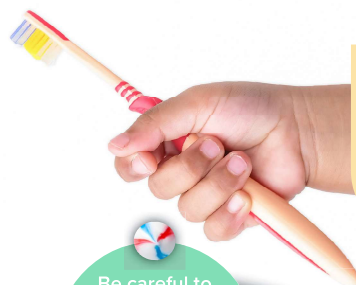
Start cleaning your baby's mouth right away to help them get used to it. It will also help both of you get in the habit.

FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BABY'S GUMS BEFORE THEIR TEETH EMERGE:

- >> Wash your hands. Make sure you clean well under your fingernails, too.
- >> Wrap a soft, wet washcloth or piece of damp gauze around your index (pointer) finger.

You don't need to use toothpaste yet.

- >> Rub the cloth gently over baby's gums.
- >> Repeat once each day. Try doing it at the same time each day so that it becomes part of your routine such as:
 - Bath time
 - Just before the last feeding of the night
 - After the first feeding of the morning



Some foods are more likely to lead to cavities than others. If your baby eats a sweet, starchy, or sticky food, clean their teeth afterward or give them a drink of water to help clean their mouth.

Be careful to cover long or sharp fingernails - this will help to keep your baby from getting poked.





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DID YOU KNOW...

Most babies' teeth start coming in around 6 months.

This can happen as early as two months or as late as 18 months!

ONCE YOU SEE THEM, YOU CAN BEGIN BRUSHING YOUR BABY'S TEETH.

- >> Choose a toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles.
- >> Use a tiny amount of toothpaste with fluoride. A thin smear or dot the size of a piece of rice is enough.
Babies only need a little bit!
- >> Brush each tooth gently on all sides.
- >> Try to brush baby's tongue to remove bacteria.
- >> Brush your baby's teeth twice a day; in the morning and before bedtime.
- >> Replace your baby's toothbrush as soon as the bristles start to look worn or flattened. Or, every three months, whichever comes first.



No matter your baby's age, it's important to never put them to bed with a bottle or cup of milk, formula, juice, soda, or any other sweet liquid. These drinks feed bacteria in the mouth that can cause cavities.

FLOSSING: Most dentists recommend that you floss your baby's teeth when they start to touch and you can no longer brush between them.

DENTIST APPOINTMENTS:
Schedule your child's first dentist visit when the first tooth appears, or by their first birthday - whichever comes first.



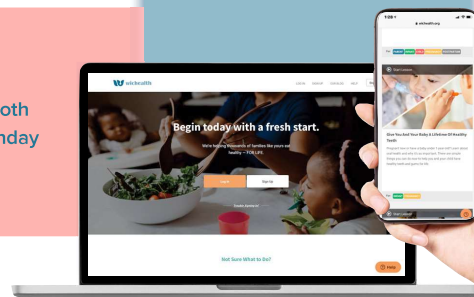
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Take This Lesson to Learn:

- Why baby teeth matter.
- Why pregnant people have a higher risk of gum disease.

To Get Started:

- Visit [wichealth.org](https://www.wichealth.org)
- Choose **Sign up**
- Enter your information
- Choose a username and password
- Choose **Begin**
- Choose the category:
Pregnancy and Baby's First 6 Months
- Choose the lesson:
Give You And Your Baby A Lifetime Of Healthy Teeth



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