

# B A B Y B O T T L E T O O T H D E C A Y

## WHAT IS BABY BOTTLE TOOTH DECAY?

Early childhood cavities, also called baby bottle tooth decay or nursing bottle mouth, can destroy the teeth of an infant or child. It occurs when a child's teeth are in contact with sugary liquids and/or foods for long periods.

A thin, sticky film called plaque covers the teeth every day. The germs in the plaque "eat" the sugar and give off acid, which attacks the teeth. If sugary liquid is allowed to remain in the mouth, acid can attack teeth and tooth decay can occur.

Among these sugary liquids that can cause tooth decay are:

- Punch
- Soda pop
- Sports drinks
- Milk
- Fruit juice
- Formula
- Breast milk



A growing family means a growing budget, so it pays for new mothers to use the services offered by Wayne County's Maternal Support and Infant Support Services Program.

## HEALTHY EATING HABITS LEAD TO HEALTHY TEETH

Many snacks that children eat can lead to cavities. Choose snacks for your child which are better for teeth, such as:

- Low fat yogurt
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Low fat cheese



## BETWEEN MEALS

It's not just what you put in the bottle or what your child eats that causes decay.

Letting your child fall asleep with a bottle, not cleaning the gums or not brushing the teeth can lead to tooth decay.

Never allow your child to fall asleep with a bottle or candy.

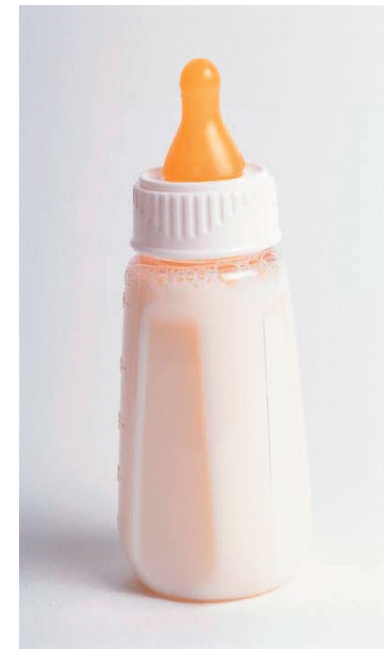
Never put juice or soda pop in a bottle. Always use a cup without a lid.

## IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

If your child is sleeping with a bottle, try taking the bottle after the baby has fallen asleep. Or try just water.

Tap water and many bottled waters contain fluoride, a mineral that helps harden the teeth, so be sure that you are using water that contains fluoride.

By spending a few minutes each day to care for your baby's teeth, you can help ensure that your child's smile gets off to a healthy start.



**WHY ARE BABY TEETH IMPORTANT?**

- They help your child chew food properly.
- They help your child’s face and mouth develop properly.
- They help your child speak clearly.
- They save spaces in the jaws so that adult teeth grow into the right places.
- If baby teeth decay they can hurt and lead to decay in the adult teeth that come in later.



**WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD FIRST SEE A DENTIST?**

Start dental visits by the child’s first birthday. Make visits often. If you think your child has dental problems, take the child to the dentist right away.

**DENTAL SERVICES ARE PROVIDED AT THESE WAYNE COUNTY CLINICS** Loretta

**Wayne Clinic**  
33030 Van Born Road  
Wayne, MI 48184  
(734) 727-7100

**Taylor Clinic**  
26650 Eureka Road  
Taylor, MI 48180  
(734) 955-3900

Or call the Tri-County  
Dental Health Council at  
(248) 559-7767

**Wayne County Department of Public Health**

[www.waynecounty.com](http://www.waynecounty.com)

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**Early Childhood Cavities**

**Baby Bottle Tooth Decay**

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