

**“I used to think baby teeth didn’t matter. But I learned that they help children stay healthy and prepare for healthy adult teeth.”**



### Here’s how:



#### Your teeth during pregnancy.

- When you’re pregnant, you may be more prone to cavities and gum disease. That’s why it is important for pregnant women to see a dentist.
- Make an appointment early in the pregnancy — well before the baby comes. (You’ll be busy afterwards!)



#### Once your baby arrives.

- Wipe your baby’s gums with a soft cloth after each feeding and before bedtime.
- Ask your baby’s doctor to check inside their mouth.
- Breastfeed infants during the first year of life and beyond as long as both mother and baby desire it.
- Take your baby to the dentist around their 1st birthday.



#### When baby teeth come in.

- As soon as your baby has a tooth, use a soft toothbrush with a little fluoride toothpaste – the size of a grain of rice – to brush twice a day. Brush together as a family!
- Put breast milk, formula or water in the bottle. Babies under 12 months don’t need sweet drinks like juice, horchata or aguas frescas.
- Switch from a bottle to a sippy cup around age 1, and don’t put your baby to bed with a bottle.
- If you give a pacifier, do not dip it in honey or sugar, to avoid cavities.
- To avoid germs, try not to share forks, spoons or foods that have been in your mouth.
- Once your child turns 3, use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste, and help them learn to spit, not swallow.



### Use fluoride to prevent cavities.

- Fluoride is mineral that helps prevent cavities. The whole family benefits from using fluoride toothpaste and drinking water with fluoride.
- Ask your baby's dentist or doctor about fluoride. They may paint your child's teeth with fluoride varnish to make them stronger. It is very effective and is safe for babies and children.



### A healthy diet is good for teeth.

- Include fresh fruits or vegetables at meals whenever you can.
- Limit sweet snacks like pan dulce and candy by offering fruit instead.
- Replace salty snacks like chips and pretzels with veggies or cheese instead.



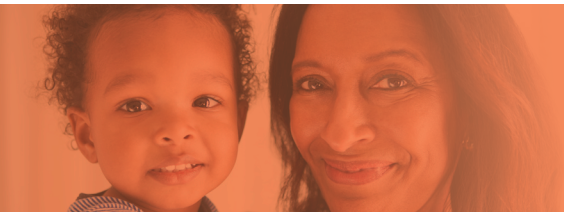
### Water is all-around good for your health!

#### Tap Water

- Tap water is safe to drink and costs less than bottled water.
- Most tap water contains fluoride, but most bottled water does not.
- Add a slice of citrus, cucumber, or mint to improve the taste of tap water.

#### Well Water

- Well water should be tested regularly to ensure it is safe to drink. Testing is available through most state or county public health departments.
- At the same time, well water can be tested to make sure it has the right amount of fluoride to protect your family's teeth.



**Kids learn by watching the people around them.**  
Families can brush teeth, drink water, and eat healthy foods together!

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