

## Remember:

- Adults can spread the germs that cause cavities. Do not put anything in your child's mouth if it has been in your mouth.
- Children should see a dentist by their first birthday.
- Brush your teeth and your child's teeth in the morning and right before bedtime with fluoride toothpaste.
- A child needs an adult's help in brushing their teeth until they are 8 years old.
- Limit how often your child has juice, sweet drinks and snacks.



*It is important to make sure your child's teeth stay healthy!*

**If your child has Medi-Cal, Healthy Families or Healthy Kids insurance, they also have coverage for dental services.**

## Next steps to take care of your child's teeth.

### Dental appointment

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dentist Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Apply fluoride varnish

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information, please visit or call:

**12345** first smiles  
[www.first5oralhealth.org](http://www.first5oralhealth.org)

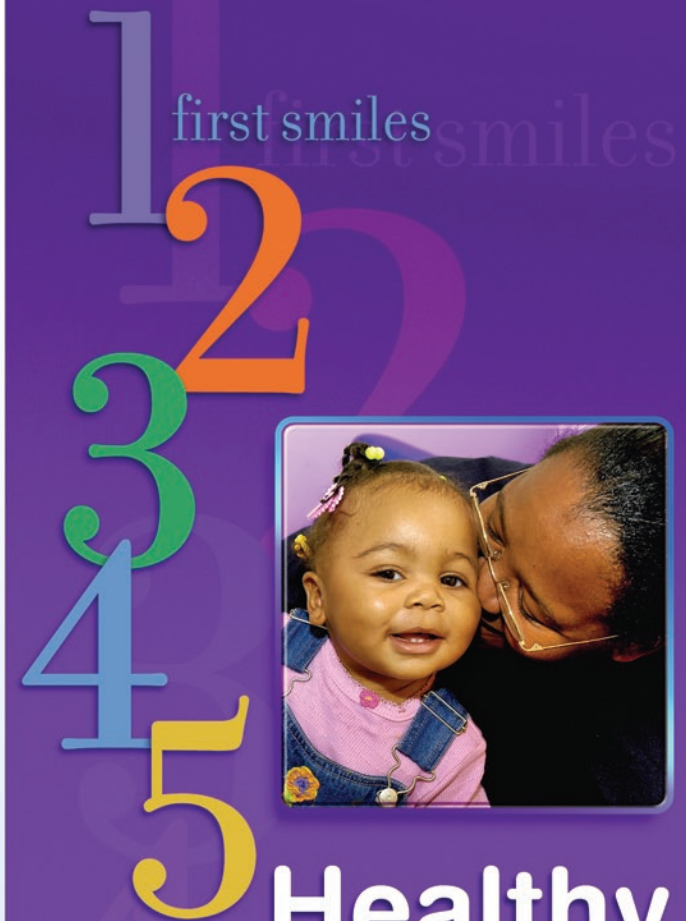


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# Healthy teeth begin at birth

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## Baby teeth are very important.

*Children need their teeth for smiling, talking and eating food. Moms, dads and other caregivers must help take care of teeth.*

## Things that you can do at home:

- Before your baby has teeth, wipe the gums gently with a clean wet cloth after each feeding. Don't put your baby to bed at naptime or at night with a bottle or sippy cup, unless it has only water in it.
- As soon as the first tooth appears, start brushing your baby's teeth with fluoride toothpaste in the morning and before bedtime. Fluoride is a mineral that protects the teeth.
- Put a small pea-sized dab of toothpaste across a small soft brush. Wipe off excess toothpaste until child can spit out.
- To avoid spreading the germs that can cause cavities, don't put anything in a child's mouth if it has been in your mouth. Don't share spoons, cups, toothbrushes, etc.
- Adults can chew sugar-free gum with xylitol in it right after eating to help prevent the spread of germs to their children.



## Things that dental and medical providers can do:

*Dentists, doctors, and other health care providers also take care of children's teeth.*



- Take your baby to the dentist by their first birthday.
- Ask your child's doctor or dentist about putting fluoride varnish on your child's teeth. This is another great way to protect your child's teeth from cavities.
- You and your child should visit the dentist on a regular basis – as often as your dentist recommends. Parents' teeth are important too!

## What your child eats and how often they eat affects their teeth.

- Soda, sweet drinks, candy, and other sweets can cause cavities that hurt.
- Snacks like cheese, yogurt, fruit and vegetables are better for your child's teeth than chips, crackers, or cereal.



- Adding an equal amount of water to fruit juice is recommended.
- After your child eats sweets, chips, crackers or juice, you should brush their teeth or rinse their teeth with water.