



PRENATAL

TAKE HOME MESSAGES FOR CAREGIVERS

- Baby teeth are important!
- Parents'/caregivers' oral health affects baby's oral health.
- Parents/caregivers should obtain regular dental check-up and get treatment if necessary.
- Schedule child's first dental appointment by age one.
- Use of fluorides, including tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste, is the most effective way to prevent tooth decay.

ORAL HEALTH ANDHYGIENE

- Encourage parents/caregivers to obtain dental check-up and, if necessary, treatment before birth of baby to reduce cavity-causing bacteria that can be passed to the baby.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to brush teeth with fluoride toothpaste.

ORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Describe primary tooth eruption patterns (first tooth usually erupts between 6-10 months old).
- Emphasize importance of baby teeth for chewing, speaking, jaw development and self-esteem.

FLUORIDE ADEQUACY

- Evaluate fluoride status in residential water supply.
- Review topical and systemic sources of fluoride.
- Encourage mother to drink fluoridated tap water.

ORAL HABITS

- Encourage mother to stop smoking.

DIET AND NUTRITION

- Emphasize eating a healthy diet and limiting number of exposures to sugar snacks and drinks.
- Emphasize that it is the *frequency* of exposures, not the *amount* of sugar, that affects susceptibility to caries.
- Encourage breastfeeding.
- Remind parents/caregivers never to put baby to bed with a bottle with anything other than water in it or to allow feeding 'at will.'

INJURY PREVENTION

- Encourage child-proofing of home including electrical cord safety and poison control.
- Emphasize use of properly secured car seat.
- Encourage caregivers to keep emergency numbers handy.

Developed by: Healthy Kids, Healthy Teeth Program, Alameda County Department of Public Health



BIRTH - 1 YEAR OLD

TAKE HOME MESSAGES FOR CAREGIVERS

- Baby teeth are important!
- Parents'/caregivers' oral health affects baby's oral health.
- Parents/caregivers should obtain regular dental check-up and get treatment if necessary.
- Parents/caregivers should avoid sharing with their child things that have been in their mouths.
- Schedule child's first dental appointment by age one.
- Prevention is less costly than treatment.
- Use of fluorides, including tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste, is the most effective way to prevent tooth decay.

ORAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

- Encourage parents/caregivers to maintain good oral health and get treatment, if necessary, to reduce spread of bacteria that can cause tooth decay.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to avoid sharing with their child things that have been in their mouths.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to become familiar with the normal appearance of child's gums.
- Emphasize using a washcloth or toothbrush to clean teeth and gums with eruption of the first tooth.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to check front and back teeth for white, brown, or black spots (signs of cavities).

ORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Discuss primary tooth eruption patterns.
- Emphasize importance of baby teeth for chewing, speaking, jaw development and self-esteem.
- Discuss teething and ways to soothe sore gums, such as chewing on teething rings and washcloths.

FLUORIDE ADEQUACY

- Evaluate fluoride status of residential water supply.
- Review topical and systemic sources of fluoride.
- Encourage drinking fluoridated tap water.
- Consider topical needs (e.g., toothpaste, fluoride varnish).

ORAL HABITS

- Encourage breastfeeding.
- Advise mother that removing child from breast after feeding and wiping baby's gums/teeth with damp washcloth reduces the risk of ECC.
- Review pacifier safety.



BIRTH - 1 YEAR OLD (continued)

DIET AND NUTRITION

- Remind parents/caregivers never to put baby to bed with a bottle with anything other than water in it or allow feeding 'at will.'
- Emphasize that it is the *frequency* of exposures, not the *amount* of sugar, that affects susceptibility to caries.
- Encourage weaning from bottle to cup by 1 year of age.
- Encourage diluting juices with water.

INJURY PREVENTION

- Review child-proofing of home including electrical cord safety and poison control.
- Emphasize use of properly secured car seat.
- Encourage caregivers to keep emergency numbers handy.

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1 - 2 YEARS OLD

TAKE HOME MESSAGES FOR CAREGIVERS

- Baby teeth are important!
- Parents'/caregivers' oral health affects baby's oral health.
- Parents/caregivers should obtain regular dental check-up and get treatment if necessary.
- Parents/caregivers should avoid sharing with their child things that have been in their mouths.
- Schedule child's first dental appointment by age one.
- Prevention is less costly than treatment.
- Use of fluorides, including tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste, is the most effective way to prevent tooth decay.

ORAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

- Encourage parents/caregivers to maintain good oral health and get treatment, if necessary, to reduce spread of bacteria that can cause tooth decay.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to avoid sharing with their child things that have been in their mouths.
- Review parent's/caregiver's role in brushing toddler's teeth.
- Discuss brush and toothpaste selection.
- Problem solve on oral hygiene issues.
- Schedule child's first dental visit by age one.

ORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Emphasize importance of baby teeth for chewing, speaking, jaw development and self-esteem.
- Discuss teething and ways to soothe sore gums, such as teething rings, washcloths.

FLUORIDE ADEQUACY

- Re-evaluate fluoride status of residential water supply.
- Review topical and systemic sources of fluoride.
- Encourage drinking fluoridated tap water.
- Review need for topical fluorides.

ORAL HABITS

- Remind mother that removing child from breast after feeding and wiping baby's gums/teeth with damp washcloth reduces the risk of ECC.
- Begin weaning of non-nutritive sucking habits at two years old.

DIET AND NUTRITION

- Remind parents/caregivers never to put baby to bed with a bottle or allow feeding 'at will'.
- Discuss healthy diet and oral health.
- Emphasize that it is the *frequency* of exposures, not the *amount* of sugar, that affects susceptibility to caries.
- Review snack choices and encourage healthy snacks.



1 - 2 YEARS OLD (continued)

INJURY PREVENTION

- Review child-proofing of home including electrical cord safety and poison control.
- Emphasize use of car seat.
- Emphasize use of helmet when child is riding tri/bicycle or in seat of adult bike.
- Remind caregivers to keep emergency numbers handy.

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3 - 5 YEARS OLD

TAKE HOME MESSAGES FOR CAREGIVERS

- Baby teeth are important!
- Parents'/caregivers' oral health affects child's overall health.
- Parents/caregivers should obtain regular dental check-up and get treatment if necessary.
- Parents/caregivers should avoid sharing with their child things that have been in their mouths.
- Prevention is less costly than treatment.
- Use of fluorides, including tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste, is the most effective way to prevent tooth decay.

ORAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

- Encourage parents/caregivers to maintain good oral health and get treatment, if necessary, to reduce spread of bacteria that can cause tooth decay.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to avoid sharing with their child things that have been in their mouths.
- Discuss parents/caregivers continued responsibility to help children under age eight to brush their teeth.
- Encourage parents/caregivers to consider dental sealants for primary and first permanent molars.

ORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Emphasize importance of baby teeth for chewing, speaking, jaw development and self-esteem.

FLUORIDE ADEQUACY

- Re-evaluate fluoride status in residential water supply.
- Review sources of fluoride.
- Review need for topical or other fluorides.

ORAL HABITS

- Discuss consequences of digit sucking and prolonged non-nutritive sucking (e.g. pacifier) and begin professional intervention if necessary.

DIET AND NUTRITION

- Review and encourage healthy diet.
- Remind parents/caregivers about limiting the *frequency* of exposures to sugar.
- Review snacking choices.
- Emphasize that child should be completely weaned from bottle and drinking exclusively from a cup.



3 - 5 YEARS OLD (continued)

INJURY PREVENTION

- Emphasize use of properly secured car seat.
- Have emergency numbers handy.
- Encourage safety in play activities including helmets on bikes and mouth guards in sports.
- Remind caregivers to keep emergency numbers handy.

Developed by *Healthy Kids, Healthy Teeth Program, Alameda County Department of Public Health*

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