

Protect your Baby's Teeth

A child that goes to bed with a bottle or has one in his mouth too often can:

- ▶ Have ear infections.
- ▶ Have problems with his teeth. This is called "Baby Bottle Tooth Decay."

Don't let your baby fall asleep with a bottle in the mouth. This may cause some serious problems!



"Baby Bottle Tooth Decay" is caused by some foods that remain in the mouth for too long. These can be: *milk or formula, soda pop, fruit juices, drinks or foods that have sugar.*

After each feeding, clean your baby's gums and teeth with a clean damp washcloth or gauze pad. At about age two, start using a soft toothbrush.

Learn from the dentist about protecting your baby's teeth with fluoride. Take your child to the dentist around the age of two; after that, take him every six months.

Breastfeeding is the best way to feed an infant, but if you bottle feed:

- ▶ Give a bottle to your baby at meal times only. In hot weather, give your baby water in the bottle. Feed water and juices in a cup as soon as your baby can sit up and is ready to drink from a cup.
- ▶ Never put your baby to bed with a bottle. If you must, fill the bottle with water only.
- ▶ Instead of putting the baby to bed with a bottle, try singing, playing music, reading or telling a story; rock the baby or give him a soft toy.
- ▶ Do not use pacifiers. If you use them, do not dip the nip of the pacifier in sweet liquids like honey or syrup.

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