

Handout Title	Early Childhood 3-5 years
1. Fluoride	✓
2. Brushing and Flossing	✓
3. Stained and Discolored Teeth	
4. Spots on Teeth	✓
5. Nutritious Snacks	✓
6. Dental Home	✓
7. Tooth Decay	✓
8. Bad Breath	
9. Bleeding Gums	
10. Nutrition During Pregnancy	
11. Changes in Mouth During Pregnancy	
12. Plaque	✓
13. Early Childhood Caries	
14. Teething	✓
15. Tooth Injuries and Prevention	✓
16. Sharing Germs	
17. Medications	✓

HELP ME  
smile

Oral Health Risk Assessment Protocols,  
Training Modules and Educational Materials  
for Use with Families of Young Children.



Early Childhood 3-5 yrs Handouts

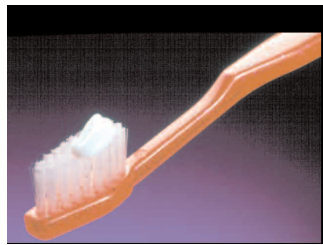
# FLUORIDE

- Makes teeth stronger and protects them from tooth decay.
- Is found naturally in water and some foods.
- Is added to many community water systems (tap water) when there isn't enough natural fluoride.
- Is also available through drops, tablets, gels, toothpastes, mouth rinses, and varnishes.
- Ask your doctor or dentist which type of fluoride is right for you and your family.



## **BRUSHING AND FLOSSING TEETH**

- Brush teeth two times a day to remove plaque.
- Brush for two-three minutes reaching all teeth.
- Brushing should be supervised by an adult until the child is 6-8 years old.
- Floss once a day – starting at age 8 with adult assistance.
- Replace toothbrush when bristles are frayed.
- Wipe the gums of infants with a wet cloth after each feeding.



# SPOTS ON TEETH

## WHAT DOES TOOTH DECAY LOOK LIKE?

- **White spots** on teeth are the first sign of tooth decay. They look chalky and white and are found near the gums where plaque forms. These spots can be reversed if they are brushed and kept clean. Early cavities are not the only white spots that can be found. A dentist can tell the difference between early decay and white spots that are not health problems such as those that are from too much fluoride.
- If the teeth are not brushed and taken care of then the **white spots** will turn in to **brown spots** on the teeth. This is more advanced tooth decay. Any brown spot is not normal and should be checked by a dentist. Just because the brown spot doesn't hurt, doesn't mean it's not a cavity.



## NUTRITIOUS SNACKS

Meal and snack choices can play a big part in the health of your teeth.

Between meals, help control plaque, bacteria and acids by:

- Eating healthy, low-sugar snacks
- Limiting how often snacks are eaten
- Avoiding sweets that stick to the teeth



# DENTAL HOME

A dental home is an office or clinic where you and your family feel

welcome and have formed a relationship with the dentist and feel

comfortable receiving dental care on a regular basis.

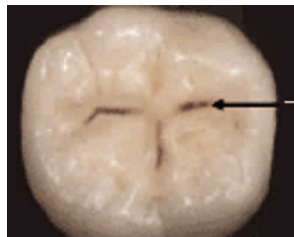
The staff at your dental home . . .

- Checks your teeth
- Keeps teeth healthy and attractive
- Gives advice on oral health issues
- Provides current information on the condition of your family's gums, teeth, and bite



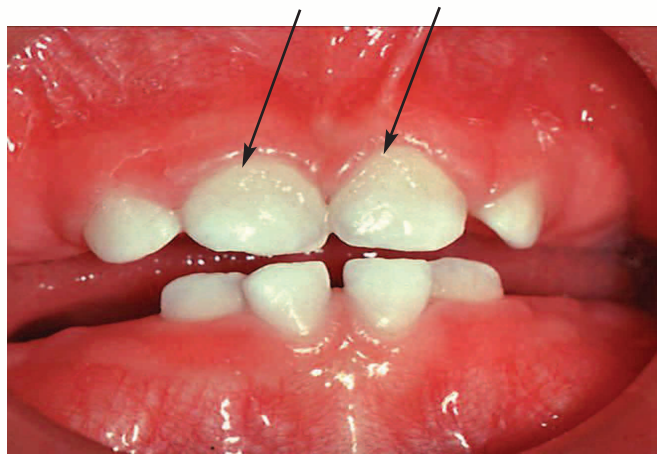
# TOOTH DECAY OR CAVITIES

- The most common type of cavity starts in the grooves of the back teeth which cannot be completely cleaned by brushing, but where food usually sticks. Cavities also start on smooth surfaces that can easily be brushed and flossed.
- When it comes to cavities, how often sugary foods are eaten is more important than the amount eaten. Changing the diet to decrease how often sugar is eaten is very important.
- Plaque + food + teeth = cavity or decay.



# PLAQUE

- Cavity-causing bacteria live in plaque.
- Plaque is a soft, yellow-white, sticky material found on teeth and gums.
- Plaque irritates the gums and causes tooth decay.
- Daily brushing and flossing removes the plaque and helps keep teeth and gums healthy.
- If plaque is not removed from the teeth daily, the gums become red, soft and swollen and bleed easily during tooth brushing.



# TEETHING

When baby teeth are about to come in, the child may:

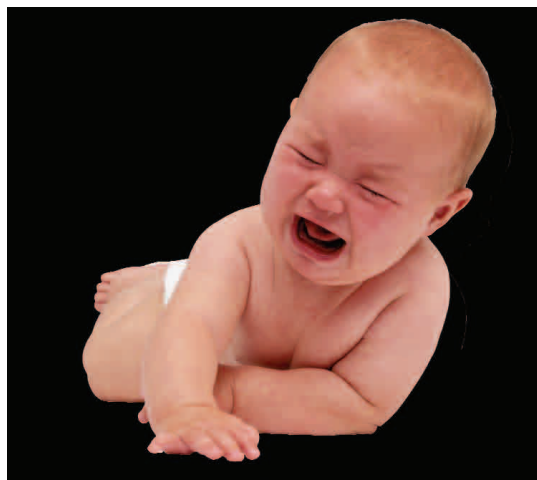
- Drool constantly
- Put fingers and hands in the mouth
- Be very restless while sleeping
- Be irritable and fussy
- Have a runny nose and slight fever

Gums will be sore, tender and swollen near the area of the tooth coming in.

To comfort, allow child to chew on:

- Cold, wet washcloth
- Teething ring – cold
- Frozen bagel

IF YOUR BABY HAS A HIGH FEVER, DIARRHEA AND/OR VOMITING THEN THEY HAVE SOME TYPE OF ILLNESS.



# TOOTH INJURIES AND PREVENTION

If a dental injury occurs:

- Find tooth- Do not try to put a baby tooth back in the child's mouth.
- Control bleeding by applying firm but gentle pressure to the area.
- Comfort the child.
- Take the child and the tooth to dentist.
- If a permanent tooth is knocked out, gently replant the tooth into its socket. Have the child hold it in place with a tissue. If it's not possible to replant the tooth, place it in a glass of cool skim or low-fat milk and see your dentist immediately. To prevent mouth injuries, follow all safety precautions for children's toys and equipment.

To prevent mouth injuries to your child:

- Do not leave him/her unattended.
- Do not purchase or let him/her use a walker.
- Install safety gates on stairs.
- Encourage use of bicycle helmet when riding toys and bikes.
- Have emergency number of doctor/dentist easily available.



## MEDICATIONS

### SUGARY MEDICINE AND CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

- Children who must take sugary medicine often have more tooth decay.
- Children with special needs have more oral health problems and it may be more difficult to clean their teeth.
- It is important to provide good oral health care every day and consult a dentist who is trained and willing to see your child with special health care needs.

