

baby bottle tooth decay

Progression of baby bottle tooth decay



The first teeth to decay are the upper front teeth.



As the decay gets worse, you will see dark brown bands around the teeth.



If the teeth are not treated, they will decay to the gum line.

What causes baby bottle tooth decay?

Tooth decay occurs more frequently with children who take a bottle to bed at nap time or at nighttime. When the baby falls asleep with the bottle in his mouth, liquid bathes the teeth all through sleep. The germs that live in the mouth eat sugar in the liquid and make strong acids. These acids decay teeth. Any drink other than water—including milk, formula, fruit juice, and soda—will cause baby bottle tooth decay.

How does baby bottle tooth decay affect a child?

When baby bottle tooth decay is allowed to progress until teeth decay to the gum line, a child may develop:

- Pain
- Poor eating habits
- Speech problems
- Emotional problems
- Damaged permanent teeth

How can I prevent baby bottle tooth decay?

- Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle. Holding your baby while feeding her is a way of showing love. It also helps keep your baby from choking.
- Teach your child to drink from a cup as soon as the primary teeth start to come in. Wean your baby from the bottle by 12 months of age.
- If your child uses a pacifier, do not dip it in anything sweet, such as sugar or honey.
- Most of all, don't forget to brush or wipe your baby's teeth each day.

What is baby bottle tooth decay?

Baby bottle tooth decay is seen in very young children. Teeth that have decayed seem to "chip" or "melt" away.

What if my child already goes to bed with a bottle?

It is best to stop giving a bottle to your child at nap time and at nighttime. If your child is already in the habit of taking a bottle to bed, remove the bottle after the child falls asleep, or try using water in the bottle in place of other liquids.



Healthcare Professional's Instructions:

The information contained in this tear pad is not intended to replace the advice of a healthcare professional.