



Delaware Opportunities Inc.
Child Care Resource and Referral
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"Building Excellence in Child Care"

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Baby Teeth Matter

According to the American Dental Association (ADA) baby teeth are at risk for decay as soon as they first appear—which is typically around 6 months.

The good news is that tooth decay is preventable!

The ADA offers the following guidelines for cleaning your child's teeth:

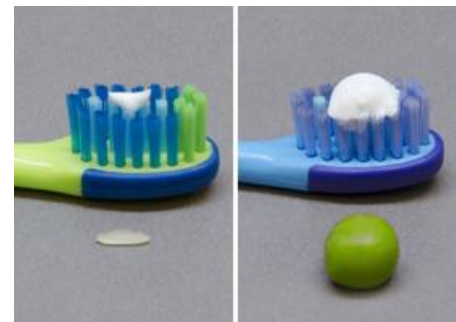
Begin cleaning your baby's mouth during the first few days after birth by wiping the gums with a clean, moist washcloth. As soon as teeth appear, decay can occur.

For children younger than 3 years, caregivers should begin brushing children's teeth as soon as they begin to come into the mouth by using fluoride toothpaste in an amount no more than a smear or the size of a grain of rice. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per day (morning and night) or as directed by a dentist or physician. Supervise children's brushing to ensure that they use the appropriate amount of toothpaste.

For children 3 to 6 years of age, use a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Brush teeth thoroughly twice per day (morning and night) or as directed by a dentist or physician. Supervise children's brushing and remind them not to swallow the toothpaste.

Until you're comfortable that your child can brush on his or her own, continue to brush your child's teeth twice a day with a child-size toothbrush and a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. When your child has two teeth that touch, you can begin flossing their teeth daily.

For more information on dental care for children visit www.mouthhealthy.org.



*a smear of
tooth paste*

*Pea-sized amount
of toothpaste*

Visit www.delawareopportunities.org for information on child care, tip sheets, and parenting education opportunities, check out the Family Pages newsletter or use the FREE online search for child care.