



Meade Zolman

Family Dentistry P.C.

616-895-7199 www.smileallendale.com

Infant Oral Health Care

Science has taught us so much about dental health in the last 50 years that there is very little need for any child to experience dental caries (cavities). While science has done its job to understand the processes necessary to cause a cavity, the dental community has done a poor job in educating the most important population (New Parents) in the prevention of cavities.

It is very simple. It takes 3-things to cause a cavity. 1. Tooth 2. Very Specific bacteria 3. Sugar (carbohydrates). Remove any one of these factors and no cavities. Obviously we don't want to remove the teeth, so we must strive to limit the other two factors.

A cavity is formed when these bacteria (plaque) attach to the tooth. These specific bacteria "eat" sugars from our diet that attach to the plaque and excrete (release) acid. It is this acid that dissolves the enamel creating a hole or cavity where more bacteria are able to hide from our toothbrush and floss. If we limit the plaque by good brush and flossing and limit the amount of sugar these bacteria need to live, we in-turn limit the bacteria and cavities are prevented.



Please share this information with anyone you know that has small children or may soon have children. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentists (AAPD) recommends the first dental visit at ~1 year of age. If parents follow the above recommendations, most children can wait till age 3.

Baby Teeth		Age Tooth Comes in (months)	Age Tooth Is Lost (years)
Upper Teeth			
Central Incisor		9.6	7.0
Lateral Incisor		12.4	8.0
Canine (Cuspid)		18.3	11.0
First Molar		15.7	10.0
Second Molar		26.2	10.5
Lower Teeth			
Second Molar		26.0	11.0
First Molar		15.1	10.0
Canine (Cuspid)		18.2	9.5
Lateral Incisor		11.5	7.0
Central Incisor		7.8	6.0



Baby bottle / Sippy cup Decay



616-895-7199

11301 Commerce Rd
Bldg1 Ste A
Allendale, MI 49401

WWW.SMILEALLENDALE.COM

Infant Oral Health Continued...

The human mouth contains some 600 species of bacteria, most are necessary for a healthy mouth. Some cause gingivitis and gum disease. Of the 600 different types of oral bacteria, only 2 cause cavities. Maybe you know someone whom drinks a lot of “pop” or eats lots of candy but never has any cavities; it is because that person does not have any of these cavity causing bacteria.

The key to selecting the “good” bacteria over the “bad” is **good oral hygiene** and **diet** as an infant. These responsibilities fall on the primary caregivers (usually parents). It is our responsibility as dental healthcare providers to give you the parents, future parents and grandparents the information necessary to make that happen.

Good oral hygiene needs to start before a child has even one tooth. Good tips to follow:

- + Wipe baby’s gums gently with a warm washcloth after feedings. (milk is lactose and lactose is sugar!)
- + **Never** put a baby to bed with a bottle or sippy cup!
- + When first teeth erupt, start using an infant tooth brush and warm water or training toothpaste (fluoride free)
- + When molar teeth erupt use a floss fork between the teeth ~2+ times per week.
- + Avoid juices. There is little to no nutritional value to juice. If a baby/toddler does not experience it they will not know what they are missing. Same goes for “pop”. Call it “mommy/daddy drink.” They don’t ask for beer, do they? Stick with water between meals.
- + Avoid sticky snacks (ie fruit gummys)
- + Do **Not** share spoon/forks/straws with infant/toddler. They get the “bad” bacteria from the parent.

See Wikipedia’s section on dental caries for more information.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dental_caries

