



# Baby Teeth Care

Birth to 2 years of age

## Why are baby teeth important?

Children use their baby teeth to chew food, learn how to speak, save space for the permanent teeth, make a nice smile, and stay happy and healthy.

## What causes decay in baby teeth?

Tooth decay is caused by a combination of:

- Germs that live in the mouth
- Sugar in our foods
- Not enough fluoride

## How should I clean my baby's teeth?

As soon as the teeth appear in the mouth, clean them twice daily with either a soft, clean washcloth, or a very soft baby toothbrush and a **rice-grain sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.**



## When should I wean my baby from the bottle?

You can begin to teach your baby how to drink from a cup at 6 – 8 months of age. You will have to help the baby hold the cup for several months. By age one, the baby should be completely weaned from the bottle.

## How do I keep my baby's teeth healthy?

- Clean baby's teeth twice every day with rice-grain sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Brush his or her teeth twice every day.
- Take your child to the dentist by age one.
- Limit sugary liquids and foods.

## DON'Ts:

- Don't put your baby to bed with the bottle unless it has only water in it.
- Don't share eating utensils or 'clean' the pacifier with your own mouth.
- Don't 'pre-chew' food.
- Don't dip the pacifier in a sweet liquid or sugar.
- Don't use the bottle as a pacifier.

**Schedule dental visit by the first birthday!**

# Cuidado de los Dientes de Leche

Del nacimiento a los 2 años de edad

## ¿Por qué son importantes los dientes de leche?

Los niños usan sus dientes de leche para masticar alimentos, aprender a hablar, reservar el espacio para los dientes permanentes, tener una linda sonrisa y estar felices y sanos.

## ¿Qué produce las caries en los dientes de leche?

Las caries en los dientes son causadas por una combinación de:

- Gérmenes que viven en la boca
- Azúcar en nuestros alimentos
- Insuficiente flúor

## ¿Cómo debo limpiar los dientes de mi bebé?

En cuanto aparecen los dientes en la boca, límpielos dos veces al día con un paño suave y limpio o un cepillo de dientes para bebés muy suave.



## ¿Cuándo debo destetar a mi bebé del biberón?

Puede comenzar enseñarle a su bebé a beber de una taza a los 6-8 meses de edad. Tendrá que ayudarlo al bebé a sostener la taza por varios meses. Para el año, el bebé debe estar completamente destetado del biberón.

## ¿Cómo mantengo los dientes de mi bebé sanos?

- Limpiar los dientes del bebé dos veces al día.
- Cepillar los dientes suyos y utilizar hilo dental dos veces por día.
- Llevar al niño al dentista al año de edad.
- Limitar los líquidos y alimentos azucarados.

## NO HACER:

- No poner al bebé a dormir con un biberón a menos que contenga solo agua.
- No compartir utensilios de comida o ‘limpiar’ el chupete en su propia boca.
- No “pre-masticar” los alimentos.
- No sumergir el chupete en líquido dulce o azúcar.
- No usar el biberón como un chupete.

**Mantenga a su bebé sonriente y prevenir la caries dental**



# Brushing Your Child's Teeth

Children  
Six Months  
and Older

## When should I start brushing my child's teeth?

- You should start to brush your child's teeth as soon as the teeth start to come, (usually around 6 - 8 months old).
- Wipe or brush the teeth with a clean, wet cloth or small, soft toothbrush.
- Ask your child's physician or dentist about using a fluoride toothpaste.

## How should I teach my child to brush his/her teeth?

- You can start teaching your child how to brush his/her teeth by showing them how to hold the toothbrush and by showing how you brush your teeth.
- Let your child 'help' brush as soon as they want to. **Note: you will need to brush their teeth after they brush their teeth.**
- Always watch your child brush, making sure that the toothpaste gets spit out. Your child should not swallow toothpaste.
- By age 7 - 8 years, most children will be able to brush completely on their own, with reminders!

## What is the proper way to brush teeth?

- Put a **small, rice-grain amount of toothpaste** on the brush. Ask your child's physician or dentist about using of fluoride toothpaste for children under age 2.
- Gently brush the teeth by using a 'circle' motion. Pay close attention to the area where the teeth meet the gum. Make sure to brush the 'cheek' side, the 'tongue' side, and the 'chewing' side on all teeth.
- Do not share a toothbrush with anyone.



## How many times a day should a child's teeth be brushed?

Children should brush his/her teeth at least twice a day, once after breakfast and again before the child goes to bed.

## How often should a child's toothbrush be replaced?

The toothbrush should be replaced every three months or when the bristles become bent or look worn out.





# Cepillando los Dientes de un Niño Niños de 6 meses de edad en adelante

## ¿Cuándo debo comenzar a cepillar los dientes del niño?

- Debe comenzar a cepillar los dientes del niño en cuanto los dientes aparecen en la boca, generalmente alrededor de los 6-8 meses de edad.
- Frote o cepille los dientes con un paño limpio y húmedo o un cepillo de dientes pequeño y suave.
- Pregunte al médico o dentista del niño si puede usar una pasta dental con flúor.

## ¿Cómo debo enseñar al niño a cepillar sus dientes?

- Puede comenzar a enseñarle al niño a cepillar sus dientes mostrándole cómo sostener el cepillo de dientes y mostrándole cómo usted se cepilla sus dientes.
- Permítale a su niño “ayudar” a cepillarse en cuanto el niño lo desee, pero usted debe cepillarle los dientes después que el niño se cepille.
- Siempre observe a su niño cepillarse, asegurándose que escupa toda la pasta dental. Su niño no debe tragar la pasta dental.
- A la edad de 7 - 8 años, la mayoría de los niños podrán cepillarse los dientes completamente por sí mismos, solo hay que recordarles!

## ¿Cuál es la forma correcta de cepillarse los dientes?

- Ponga una pequeña cantidad (como un grano de arroz) de pasta dental en el cepillo. Pregunte al médico o dentista del niño si puede usar pasta dental con flúor para niños menores de 2 años de edad.
- Cepille suavemente los dientes usando un movimiento “circular”. Preste mucha atención al área donde el diente se une a la encía. Asegúrese de cepillar el lado de la “mejilla” y el lado de la “lengua” y la superficie de “mascar” de todos los dientes superiores e inferiores.
- No comparta el cepillo de dientes con nadie.



## ¿Cuántas veces por día deben cepillarse los dientes de un niño?

Cepillar los dientes del niño todos los días, dos veces por día, una después del desayuno y de nuevo antes que el niño se vaya a la cama en la noche.

## ¿Cuán a menudo debe reemplazarse el cepillo de dientes de un niño?

El cepillo de dientes debe reemplazarse al menos cada tres meses o cuando las cerdas se doblan o se ven gastadas.

# COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT FLUORIDE:

## A Resource for Parents and Caregivers

### 1. Why do children need fluoride?

Fluoride is an important mineral for all children. Our mouths contain bacteria that combine with sugars in the foods we eat and the beverages we drink. The acid that is produced harms tooth enamel and damages teeth. Fluoride protects teeth by making them more resistant to acid and can even help reverse early signs of decay.

### 2. Is fluoridated water safe for me and my children to drink?

Yes. Decades of research and practical experience have confirmed the safety of fluoride. Based on what has been learned from both science and our years of experience, the world's leading health, dental, and medical organizations recognize water fluoridation as an effective way to reduce tooth decay for everyone – children and adults alike.

### 3. We brush our teeth with fluoride toothpaste every day. Do we still need fluoridated water?

Yes. For most people, brushing with fluoridated toothpaste is not enough. Drinking fluoridated water throughout the day bathes our teeth in low levels of fluoride to help them stay strong. That, combined with the more concentrated fluoride in dental products, prevents more tooth decay than toothpaste alone. That is why it is so important to make sure your children are drinking fluoridated water and brushing properly with fluoride toothpaste at least twice a day.

### 4. Are there health risks associated with these forms of fluoride?

No. There is no credible scientific evidence that fluoridated water or dental products contribute to or cause illness or disease. The only proven risk associated with excess fluoride is a cosmetic condition known as dental fluorosis.

### 5. What exactly is dental fluorosis? Should I be concerned about fluorosis from drinking fluoridated water?

Dental fluorosis is a change in the appearance of the teeth, usually in the form of very faint white markings. It is usually detectable only by a dental expert during an exam. Most fluorosis does not affect the function or health of the teeth. In fact, teeth with mild fluorosis are more resistant to cavities.

Most fluorosis is the result of consuming too much fluoride while teeth are forming, before the age of 8. To reduce this possibility, supervise brushing so that children do not use too much toothpaste or mouth rinse and learn to spit, not swallow.



The American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Dental Association, and the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry all support the use of fluoride to protect children's teeth.



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## 6. Is it safe to mix infant formula with fluoridated water?

According to the American Dental Association, it is safe to mix infant formula with fluoridated water.





## 7. Are the fluoride additives used to fluoridate drinking water safe?

Yes. The fluoride that is added to public water supplies conforms to stringent safety standards and results in water that complies with the Safe Drinking Water Act. The quality and safety of fluoride additives are ensured by Standard 60, a program that was commissioned by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This program is monitored by an independent committee of experts, including the Association of State Health Officials and other key organizations.

## 8. How much fluoride should my child have to protect his/her teeth?

Children who consume a nutritious diet, drink fluoridated water, and use fluoridated toothpaste properly will get all the fluoride they need for healthy teeth. It is not necessary to monitor water or food consumption since your child ingests low levels of fluoride from these sources. Parents will want to assure that children are not swallowing mouth rinse or toothpaste, which contain more concentrated amounts of this important mineral. Your health or dental provider can help you determine if your child is getting an adequate amount of fluoride to protect his/her teeth.

### Sources of Fluoride

-  Beverages, including fluoridated tap water
-  Foods processed with fluoridated water
-  Toothpaste and other oral care products
-  Topical fluoride & dietary supplements

## 9. I have heard fluoride can cause all kinds of things, from lower IQ to cancer. Can that be true?

No. There is no credible scientific evidence that water fluoridated at the levels used in the United States contributes to or causes disease or poor health. The only proven risk associated with fluoride intake from any source is dental fluorosis which can be lowered with proper use of fluoridated products like toothpaste and mouth rinse.

## 10. Is bottled water fluoridated?

Most bottled water is not fluoridated. If it is, it will say so on the label. Many bottled waters are filled from municipal water supplies, and some of those sources may be fluoridated. But if fluoride was not added as part of the bottling process, it will not appear on the label. To be sure, call the number on the label for more information.

*The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.*

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For additional resources and information, please visit [www.ILikeMyTeeth.org](http://www.ILikeMyTeeth.org).

# FLUOROSIS FACTS:

## A Resource for Parents and Caregivers

Fluoride is an important mineral for all children. Our mouths contain bacteria that combine with sugars in the foods we eat and the beverages we drink. The acid that is produced harms tooth enamel and damages teeth. Fluoride protects the teeth and can even help reverse early signs of decay. But the increased availability of fluoride today has resulted in more of something called dental fluorosis.

### What is Dental Fluorosis?

Dental fluorosis is a change in the appearance of the tooth's enamel surface. The most common types do not affect the function of the tooth and don't cause pain.

Most dental fluorosis is either very mild or mild. Mild forms of fluorosis appear as white, lacy markings on the tooth's enamel and are difficult to see with the untrained eye.

Fewer instances of fluorosis are categorized as moderate. Moderate fluorosis looks just like mild but covers more of the tooth.

In rare cases, fluorosis is described as severe. When fluorosis is severe, the enamel may have pitting and brown spots.



**NORMAL**



**MILD**



**MODERATE**



**SEVERE**

### What Causes Dental Fluorosis?

Dental fluorosis is caused by consuming too much fluoride over the period of time when teeth are forming but before they appear in the mouth. This takes place before 8 years of age. To avoid this possibility, supervise brushing so that children do not use too much toothpaste, mouthwash, or mouthrinse and learn to spit, not swallow.

For more information, please see the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) - CDC website - on [Dental Fluorosis](#).

For more information on good dental habits for kids, please see [First Steps to a Healthy Smile](#) at [HealthyChildren.org](#).





### How Do I Know if My Child Has Dental Fluorosis?

Since there are many possible causes of changes in the appearance of the teeth, you may want to see a dental professional to have the teeth checked for fluorosis or other issues. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children begin regular visits to the dentist by their first birthday. Ask your pediatrician's office if they offer referrals.

### How Much Fluoride Should My Child Have to Protect His/Her Teeth Without the Risk of Fluorosis?

Children who consume a typical diet, drink fluoridated water, and use fluoridated dental products properly will get the fluoride they need for healthy teeth. It is not necessary to monitor water or food consumption since your child ingests low levels of fluoride from these sources. Parents will want to ensure that children do not swallow toothpaste or mouthrinse, which contain more concentrated amounts of this important mineral. For more information, see the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry [parent brochure on Fluoride](#).

### Sources of Fluoride

-  Beverages, including fluoridated tap water
-  Foods processed with fluoridated water
-  Toothpaste and other oral care products
-  Topical fluoride & dietary supplements

# How Do I Protect My Child's Teeth Without Causing Fluorosis?

## Here are three things you can do:

1. Follow these guidelines on the proper use of dental products such as toothpaste. [Toothbrushing Tips for Young Children](#) on [HealthyChildren.org](#). Children under the age of 6 should avoid the use of mouthwash and mouthrinse.
  - Children younger than age 3 should use a “smear” of toothpaste containing fluoride.
  - Limit tooth brushing to 2 times a day for this age group.
  - Children aged 3-6 years should use a slightly larger, “pea-sized” amount of toothpaste containing fluoride.
  - Supervise and help young children with tooth brushing. Since most young children will instinctively swallow water, they should be encouraged to spit out excess toothpaste, but not rinse with water.
  - Keep all dental products out of the reach of young children to avoid accidental ingestion.
2. Determine whether your primary source of water is fluoridated.
  - For information on local water systems see the CDC [My Water's Fluoride](#).
  - For information on well water, see [Private Well Water & Fluoride](#).
  - Most bottled water in the U.S. does not contain an optimal level of fluoride.
  - If your water is not fluoridated, speak to your child's doctor or dentist about ways to ensure your family is getting enough fluoride from other sources.
3. Start regular visits to the dentist by your child's first birthday. If you do not have a dentist yet, your child's doctor can refer you to a dental home. He can also check her teeth, talk to you about taking care of her oral health, and make sure she is getting enough fluoride.



**UNDER 3 YEARS  
= SMEAR**



**OVER 3 YEARS  
= PEA-SIZED**

## What About Infant Formula?

According to the American Dental Association, it is safe to mix infant formula with fluoridated water.

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## Not all sugars are sweet!



Starchy foods, including snacks kids like such as pretzels, crackers, and chips, contain sugars, and sugar contributes to tooth decay!

Limit sweet and salty snacks, and offer water instead of sweetened beverages like soda pop and juice.

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry has a parent brochure on [Diet and Snacking](#).

For additional resources and information, please visit [www.ILikeMyTeeth.org](#).

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CAMPAIGN FOR  
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life is better **WITH TEETH**

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National Network for Oral Health Access





# Brush Up on Oral Health

## Primary (Baby) Teeth

Some parents believe that primary (baby) teeth are less important than permanent teeth because primary teeth are going to “fall out anyway.” However, primary teeth are key to a child’s growth and development. Head Start staff play a vital role in helping parents understand the importance of primary teeth to good oral health and overall health and well-being.

This issue of *Brush Up on Oral Health* talks about why primary teeth are important and offers information that Head Start staff can share with parents. A recipe for a healthy snack that can be made in the Head Start classroom or at home is also included.

### Did You Know?

- By the time a child is 2 to 3 years old, they usually have all 20 primary teeth.
- A child usually does not lose their last primary tooth until age 10 to 12.

## Information About Primary Teeth to Share with Parents

- **Primary teeth are important.** Primary teeth are key to young children’s health and development in five ways. These include:
  - **Maintaining good health.** The health of primary teeth affects children’s overall health and well-being. Tooth decay in primary teeth can lead to abscessed teeth. Infections from abscessed teeth can spread to other areas in the head and neck and lead to fever, pain, severe swelling, and, in rare cases, death. Using antibiotics to treat dental infections may work temporarily. However, infections will always come back if tooth decay is not treated.
  - **Maintaining good nutrition.** To grow and be strong, children need to eat healthy foods. Children with tooth decay in their primary teeth are less likely to eat crunchy foods, such as fresh fruits and vegetables that promote good nutrition and a healthy body. These children are also at risk for developing nutritional deficiencies and becoming malnourished.



- **Helping with development of speech.** Losing teeth early due to tooth decay can interfere with the development of a young child’s speech. Young children with missing teeth have difficulty making “th,” “la,” and other sounds. This can make it hard for others to understand the child. In some cases, the child may need speech therapy to change speech patterns he or she developed because of missing teeth.
  - **Maintaining space for permanent teeth.** Primary teeth hold space for permanent teeth developing underneath them in the jaw. This picture of an X-ray shows permanent teeth developing below primary teeth. If primary teeth are lost too early, other teeth move into the space and block the incoming permanent teeth. This can cause crowding.
  - **Promoting self-confidence.** Young children can be quick to call attention to others’ teeth that are decayed, chipped, or discolored. Children with visible tooth decay often do not smile, cover their mouth with their hands when they speak, or minimize interaction with others. A healthy smile gives children the self-confidence they need to have positive social experiences.
- 
- **Tooth decay in primary teeth matters.**
    - Children with pain from tooth decay do not do as well in school and have more behavior problems than children with no pain.
    - Tooth decay can also spread from one tooth to another. Children with severe tooth decay may need to receive treatment in a hospital operating room.
  - **Brushing primary teeth with fluoride toothpaste every day promotes good oral health.** As soon as the first tooth appears, parents should begin brushing a baby’s tooth with a smear (rice-sized amount) of fluoride toothpaste twice a day. Making this a daily habit lowers the amount of bacteria in the mouth, helps prevent tooth decay, and starts a lifetime of good oral health habits.
  - **Having a dental visit by age 1 promotes good oral health.** The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry recommends that a child have his or her first dental visit by age 1. A young child’s dental visit is simple and quick. The oral health professional looks in the child’s mouth, identifies potential problems, and explains what changes to expect in the child’s mouth as he or she develops and grows. The oral health professional also shows parents how to take care of their child’s teeth and may apply fluoride varnish to the child’s teeth.

The *Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles* handout [Understanding Why Baby Teeth Are Important](#), also available in [Spanish \(español\)](#), can be shared with parents to reinforce conversations about primary teeth.

## Cook's Corner: Watermelon Pops

Here is a delicious and healthy snack that children can make in a Head Start classroom or at home with their families.

### Ingredients

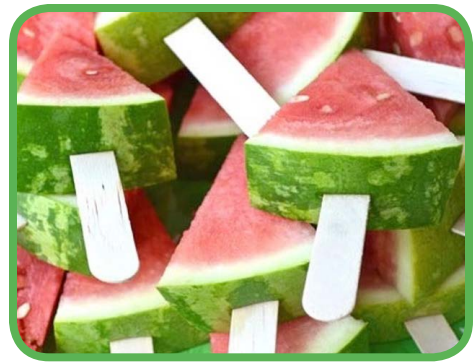
- 1 small watermelon
- 12 craft sticks

### Directions

1. Slice watermelon and cut into quarters.
2. Push a craft stick into the watermelon rind to form a pop.

### Makes 12 servings

**Safety tip:** An adult should slice the ingredients.



## Contact Us

The National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness welcomes your feedback on this issue, as well as your suggestions for topics for future issues. Please forward your comments to [health@ecetta.info](mailto:health@ecetta.info) or call 866-763-6481.

Subscribe or view all issues of [Brush Up on Oral Health](#) on the [Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center \(ECLKC\)](#).

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*School readiness begins with health!*



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NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

# Dientes de leche o primarios

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[eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/es/publicacion/dientes-de-leche-o-primarios](https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/es/publicacion/dientes-de-leche-o-primarios)

[Vea las últimas actualizaciones sobre la enfermedad por coronavirus 2019 \(COVID-19\) de la Oficina Nacional de Head Start »](#)

¿Sabía usted que...?

- En el momento en que un niño tiene de 2 a 3 años, por lo general tiene los 20 dientes primarios.
- Generalmente los niños no pierden su último diente primario hasta los 10 o 12 años.



## Repasa sobre la salud oral

Algunos padres creen que los dientes primarios (de leche) son menos importantes que los dientes permanentes porque los dientes primarios se van a "caer de todos modos". Sin embargo, los dientes primarios son clave para el crecimiento y desarrollo de un niño. El personal de Head Start desempeña un papel vital para ayudar a los padres a entender la importancia de los dientes primarios para la buena salud oral y la salud y el bienestar general.

Este número de *Repasa sobre la salud oral* habla sobre por qué los dientes primarios son importantes y ofrece información que el personal de Head Start puede compartir con los padres. También se incluye una receta para una merienda saludable que se puede preparar en el aula de Head Start o en casa.

Descargar el PDF

[PDF, 455KB]

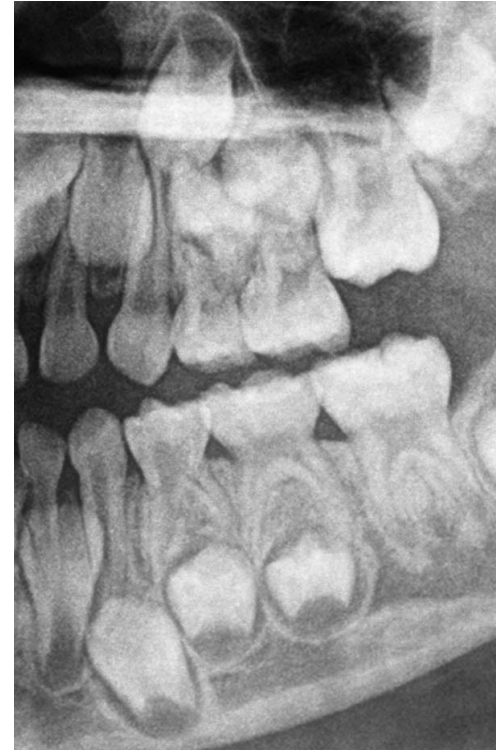


## Información sobre los dientes primarios para compartir con los padres

- **Los dientes primarios son importantes.** Los dientes primarios son clave para la salud y el desarrollo de los niños pequeños por cinco razones, entre las que se incluyen las siguientes:
  - **Para tener buena salud.** La salud de los dientes primarios afecta la salud y el bienestar general de los niños. La caries dental en los dientes primarios puede conducir a abscesos dentales. Las infecciones por abscesos dentales pueden propagarse a otras áreas de la cabeza y el cuello y provocar fiebre, dolor, una fuerte inflamación y, en raras ocasiones, la muerte. Tratar las infecciones dentales con antibióticos puede dar resultado temporalmente. Pero si no se trata la caries dental, la infección reaparecerá.
  - **Para mantener una buena nutrición.** Para poder crecer y estar fuertes, los niños necesitan comer alimentos saludables. Los niños con caries dentales en los dientes primarios son menos propensos a comer alimentos crujientes, como frutas y verduras frescas que promueven una buena nutrición y un cuerpo saludable. Estos niños también corren riesgo de tener deficiencias nutricionales y de estar malnutridos.
  - **Para ayudar con el desarrollo del habla.** Perder los dientes antes de tiempo debido a las caries dentales puede interferir con el desarrollo del habla de un niño pequeño. Los niños pequeños a los que se les han caído los dientes tienen dificultad para pronunciar sonidos como "th", "la" y otros. Esto puede hacer que a otras personas les resulte difícil entenderlos. En algunos casos, es posible que el niño necesite terapia del habla para cambiar los patrones del habla que adquirió por no tener esos dientes.



- **Para mantener el espacio para los dientes permanentes.** Los dientes primarios guardan el espacio para cuando salgan los dientes permanentes que se están desarrollando en la mandíbula. Esta imagen de una radiografía muestra los dientes permanentes que se están desarrollando debajo de los dientes primarios. Si los primarios se caen demasiado pronto, otros dientes pueden ocupar ese espacio y bloquear a los permanentes que saldrán después. Esto puede hacer que los dientes crezcan apiñados.
- **Para promover la confianza en sí mismo.** Los niños pequeños no lo piensan dos veces para llamar la atención sobre los dientes con caries, astillados o con cambio de color de otros niños. Los niños con caries dentales visibles muchas veces no sonríen, se cubren la boca con las manos cuando hablan o reducen su interacción con los demás. Una sonrisa saludable les da a los niños la confianza en sí mismos que necesitan para tener experiencias sociales positivas.
- **Hay que prestar atención a las caries dentales en los dientes primarios.**
  - A los niños que tienen dolor por caries dentales no les va muy bien en la escuela y tienen más problemas de conducta que los niños que no tienen dolor.
  - La caries dental también puede propagarse de un diente a otro. Puede ser que los niños con caries dentales extensas necesiten recibir tratamiento en el quirófano de un hospital.
- **Cepillarse los dientes primarios con pasta de dientes con flúor todos los días promueve la buena salud oral.** Tan pronto como aparezca el primer diente, los padres deben comenzar a cepillar el diente del bebé con una pequeña cantidad (del tamaño de un grano de arroz) de pasta de dientes con flúor dos veces al día. Seguir este hábito a diario hace que se reduzca la cantidad de bacterias en la boca, previene la caries dental, y es el principio de una vida de buenos hábitos de salud oral.
- **Llevar al niño al dentista a la edad de 1 año promueve la buena salud oral.** La Academia Estadounidense de Odontología Pediátrica recomienda que los niños acudan a su primera visita al dentista a la edad de 1 año. La visita dental de un niño pequeño es simple y rápida. El profesional de salud oral le revisa la boca al niño, detecta problemas potenciales y explica qué cambios se producirán en la boca del niño a medida que este se desarrolla y crece. El profesional de la salud oral también les muestra a los padres cómo cuidar los dientes de su hijo y puede ser que aplique barniz de flúor en los dientes del niño.



El folleto *Hábitos sanos para sonrisas felices* [Por qué son importantes los dientes de leche](#), también disponible en [inglés](#), se puede distribuir entre los padres para reforzar las conversaciones sobre los dientes primarios.

## El rincón de la cocina: Paletas de sandía

Esta deliciosa y saludable merienda pueden prepararla los niños en el aula de Head Start o en casa con sus familias.

### Ingredientes

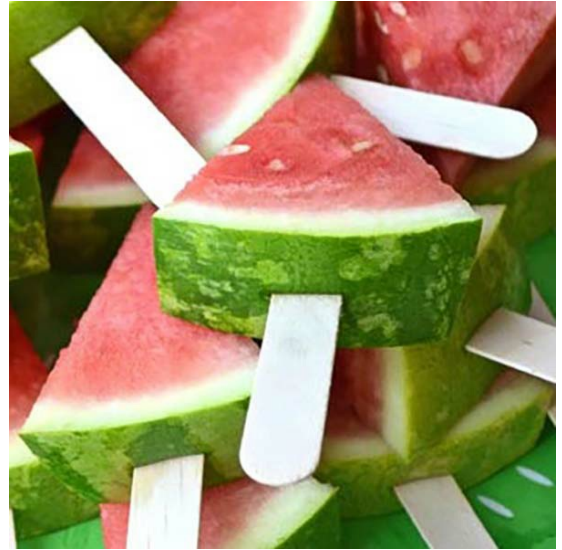
- 1 sandía pequeña
- 12 paletas para hacer artesanías

### Instrucciones

1. Corte la sandía en cuartos.
2. Luego introduzca la paleta en la corteza de la sandía.

### Da 12 porciones

**Consejo de seguridad:** Un adulto debe cortar los ingredientes.



## Contáctenos

El Centro Nacional de Salud y Bienestar de la Primera Infancia agradece sus comentarios sobre este tema, así como sus sugerencias para temas de futuros números. Por favor, envíe sus comentarios a [health@ecetta.info](mailto:health@ecetta.info) o llame al 866-763-6481.

Suscríbase o consulte todos los números de [Repasa sobre la salud oral](#).

Tema: [Salud oral](#)

Palabras clave: [Higiene oral](#), [Cuidado dental](#)

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## Nutrition and Oral Health

### 1. Is it okay to put my baby to bed with a bottle?

- To prevent tooth decay, do not give your child a bottle or ‘sippy cup’ filled with any sweet liquid (juice, sweetened water, soda pop, or milk) at nap or bedtime.
- Instead, fill the bottle or cup with water only.
- Best of all, don’t give any bottle for nap or bedtime. Infants should be held during feedings.

### 2. What foods are the healthiest food choices for young children?

- Offer your child snacks that are low in sugar, such as raw fruits and vegetables, cheese and yogurt.
- Avoid giving your child sugary foods such as soda pop, candy, cookies, sweetened cereals and fruit roll-ups, for between meal snacks,
- Choosing healthy foods provides your child with a well-balanced diet to maintain good dental and physical health.
- Eating a piece of fruit is healthier than drinking fruit juice.

### 3. When is the best time to offer my child a sugary ‘treat’?

- Serve food containing sugar at mealtimes only and limit the amount.
- Frequent eating or drinking of sugary foods increases the chance of developing tooth decay.
- If your child has a bedtime snack, make sure that you brush his teeth with fluoride toothpaste after the snack before going to bed.

### 4. What does sugar do to the teeth?

- Sugar is one of the main causes of tooth decay.
- When dietary sugar and mouth germs combine on the tooth enamel, an acid is formed.
- The acid weakens the enamel, and eventually a cavity is formed.
- Reducing sugar intake lowers the risk of tooth decay for all of us.



## Nutrición y Salud Oral

### 1. ¿Está bien poner a mi bebé a dormir con un biberón?

- Para evitar las caries en los dientes, no le dé al niño un biberón o “tacita de bebé” llena con cualquier líquido dulce (jugo, agua endulzada, refresco de soda o leche) en la siesta o la hora de dormir en la noche.
- En cambio, llene el biberón o tacita con agua solamente.
- Lo mejor de todo, no le dé ningún biberón para la siesta ni hora de dormir. Los infantes deben ser cargados en brazos durante su alimentación.

### 2. ¿Cuáles alimentos son las opciones de alimentos más sanas para niños pequeños?

- Ofrezca a su niño bocadillos bajos en azúcar, como frutas y vegetales crudos, queso y yogurt.
- Evite dar a su niño alimentos azucarados como refrescos de soda, dulces, galletas, cereal azucarado y rollos de pasta de fruta, para bocadillos entre las comidas.
- Seleccionar alimentos saludables le da a su niño una dieta bien balanceada para mantener una buena salud dental y física.
- Es más saludable comer una fruta que beber jugo de fruta.

### 3. ¿Cuándo es el mejor momento para ofrecer a mi hijo un “regalo” dulce?

- Sirva alimentos que contienen azúcar solamente a la hora de comida y limite la cantidad.
- El comer o tomar frecuentemente alimentos azucarados aumenta la posibilidad de desarrollar caries en los dientes.
- Si su niño come un bocadillo a la hora de dormir, asegúrese de cepillarle sus dientes con pasta dental con flúor después del bocadillo antes de ir a dormir.

### 4. ¿Qué hace el azúcar a los dientes?

- El azúcar es una de las principales causas de caries dentales.
- Cuando el azúcar dietario y los gérmenes de la boca se combinan sobre el esmalte del diente, se forma un ácido.
- El ácido debilita el esmalte, y eventualmente se forma una cavidad.
- Reducir el consumo de azúcar disminuye el riesgo de caries dentales en todas las personas.

## **Plaque and Tooth Decay For Children 6 Months and Older**

### **1. What is plaque?**

- Dental plaque is a sticky film that forms on the teeth and has germs in it.
- It builds up daily in the mouth and is hard to see.
- It is soft and can be brushed off.

### **2. What do the germs in plaque do?**

- Plaque germs use sugar as food. Even a very small amount of sugar is enough for the germs to make an acid.
- It is the acid that attacks the enamel of the tooth, causing the tooth to break down.
- As the tooth breaks down and weakens, a cavity can form.
- Eating foods with sugar several times during the day can lead to more acid attacks.

### **3. How can plaque be removed from a child's teeth?**

- The best way to remove plaque from the teeth and keep it off is by brushing at least twice a day.

### **4. Why is it important to use fluoride?**

- Fluoride makes the tooth stronger and lowers the chance of cavities.
- The best way for a child to get fluoride's protection is by brushing with fluoride toothpaste following the advice from your child's dentist or doctor.
- Drinking water that contains the right amount of fluoride is very important to make sure that your child's developing baby teeth are getting enough fluoride.
- To find out if your water has the right amount of fluoride, ask your child's dentist or doctor.

### **5. How can tooth decay be prevented?**

- Remember that tooth decay is a disease caused by germs that can be passed to the child by a parent or other caregiver who has had cavities.
- Brush at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Eat healthy foods and limit the amount of foods that have a lot of sugar by eating them only at meal times.
- Visit the dentist regularly on a schedule set by the dentist.
- Drink fluoridated water.
- Have fluoride varnish put on the baby teeth to help prevent tooth decay. Ask your baby's doctor or dentist about fluoride varnish.

## **Placa y caries dentales**

### **Para niños de 6 meses en adelante**

#### **1. ¿Qué es la placa?**

- La placa dental es una película pegajosa que se forma en los dientes y que contiene gérmenes.
- Se acumula a diario en la boca y es difícil de ver.
- Es suave y se puede quitar con el cepillo.

#### **2. ¿Qué hacen los gérmenes de la placa?**

- Los gérmenes de la placa usan el azúcar como alimento. Incluso una cantidad muy pequeña de azúcar es suficiente para que los gérmenes lo conviertan en ácido.
- El ácido es el que ataca el esmalte dental, ocasionando que el diente se deteriore.
- A medida que el diente se deteriora y debilita, se puede formar una caries.
- Comer alimentos con azúcar varias veces durante el día puede conducir a más ataques con ácido.

#### **3. ¿Cómo se puede eliminar la placa de los dientes de un niño?**

- La mejor manera de eliminar la placa de los dientes y mantener los dientes libres de placa es cepillando los dientes al menos dos veces al día.

#### **4. ¿Por qué es importante utilizar flúor?**

- El flúor fortalece los dientes y reduce la probabilidad de caries.
- La mejor manera de dar protección con flúor a un niño es cepillando sus dientes con pasta dental con flúor siguiendo el consejo del dentista o doctor de su niño.
- El agua potable que contiene la cantidad adecuada de flúor es muy importante para asegurarse que los dientes de leche en desarrollo de su niño están recibiendo suficiente fluoruro.
- Para saber si su agua tiene la cantidad correcta de flúor, consulte al dentista o doctor de su niño.

#### **5. ¿Cómo se puede prevenir la caries dental?**

- Recuerde que la caries dental es una enfermedad causada por gérmenes que se pueden pasar al niño a través de los padres u otro cuidador que han tenido caries.
- Cepílese por lo menos dos veces al día con pasta dental con flúor.
- Coma alimentos saludables y limite la cantidad de alimentos que tienen mucha azúcar comiéndolos solo durante las horas de comida.
- Visite al dentista regularmente según la programación establecida por el dentista.
- Beba agua con flúor.
- Pida que le pongan barniz de flúor en los dientes de leche de su niño para ayudar a prevenir las caries. Consulte al doctor o dentista de su bebe sobre el barniz de flúor.