

Better ways to comfort your child at bedtime

Your child may cry or fight when giving up the bedtime bottle. The following choices can help:

- ♥ Give a clean pacifier.
- ♥ Hold or rock your child.
- ♥ Sing or play music.
- ♥ Use a musical toy.
- ♥ Give your child a back rub.
- ♥ Read to your child.
- ♥ Give a favorite blanket or toy.

These choices can also help make weaning easier when you and your child are ready. **Remember, you are making these changes out of love!**



What one thing will you do to make sure your child's teeth are healthy?

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Keep your child smiling...

Prevent early childhood cavities





Prevent early childhood cavities and keep your child smiling!

Baby teeth are important. When they have decay, your child may have pain, eating and speech problems, and a poor self-image. If baby teeth are lost too early, the permanent teeth may come in crowded or out of line.

Does your child:

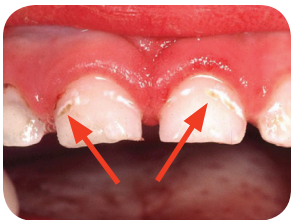
- Go to bed with a bottle filled with milk, formula, or a sweetened drink?
- Sleep all night at the breast?
- Drink from a bottle or sippy cup throughout the day?
- Use a pacifier dipped in sugar or honey?



Children who do one or more of these things are more likely to have early childhood cavities.

Early childhood cavities happen when liquids that contain sugar are left in a child's mouth for a long time. Even breast milk and formula contain sugar.

The Stages of Tooth Decay



Mild Decay



Moderate Decay



Severe Decay

Start early to protect your child's teeth!

1. Put your child to bed without a bottle. If your child must have a bottle to sleep, fill the bottle with water. You may need to gradually dilute the contents until only water is offered.
2. Clean your baby's teeth and gums with a clean washcloth or a small, soft toothbrush at bedtime.
3. Brush your child's teeth twice a day with a soft toothbrush and a smear of toothpaste.
4. Don't let your child drink from a bottle or a sippy cup all day long.
5. Wean your baby from the bottle by 1 year of age.
6. Once the first tooth appears, don't let your baby sleep all night at the breast. Place your baby on his or her back after nursing.
7. Begin teaching your baby to drink from a cup around 6 months of age. Offer water, breast milk or formula. Juice is not recommended during a baby's first year.
8. Avoid soda pop and other sweet drinks.
9. Check with your doctor or dentist to make sure your child is getting enough fluoride each day. Fluoride protects your child's teeth from decay.