



Prevention of Baby Bottle Tooth Caries

如何預防奶瓶性蛀牙(英文)

What' s “Baby Bottle Tooth Caries” ?

“Baby Bottle Tooth Caries” (or “Baby Bottle Tooth Decay”) basically refers to the tooth decay in the babies/children under 3 years old. This type of tooth decay often occurs in the upper front teeth, but other teeth may also be affected.

One common cause of baby bottle tooth caries is frequent, prolonged exposure of the baby' s teeth to milk or sugar-containing drinks. Tooth decay can occur when the baby is put to sleep with a bottle used as a pacifier. After the baby falls asleep, the sugar-containing liquid inside the mouth goes around the teeth and forms an excellent environment for oral bacteria to produce acidity which leads to tooth decay. In some cases, “Baby Bottle Tooth Caries” can also result from breastfeeding.

The children with extensive “Baby Bottle Tooth Caries” may lose the normal functions of teeth such as chewing food and speaking. They also have higher risks of progressing from tooth decay to severe dental infections which may be harmful to the development of adult teeth. In extreme cases, dental infections can be life-threatening.

How to prevent “Baby Bottle Tooth Caries” ?

1. Finish the bottle-feeding work within 20 minutes to shorten the exposure time of baby' s teeth to milk.
2. Stop bottle-feeding the babies once they learn to drink milk from a cup, usually at approximately 12 months of age.
3. Don' t feed the baby sugar-containing drinks before sleep.

4. Parent should clean the baby' s teeth after each feeding. It is worth noting that the first baby' s tooth normally comes in at about 6 months of age.

The Key Points of Cleaning Baby' s/Children' s Teeth

1. Before the age of tooth eruption (usually 6 months of age), please use moist gauze to wipe away the debris in the baby' s mouth.
2. After the teeth start to emerge, parents should clean the teeth with toothbrushes, without toothpaste, after every meal. Brushing the teeth most thoroughly before sleep is especially important. Holding the baby on the lap makes the tooth-cleaning work easier to do. It takes patience as well because the babies might resist to the cleaning.
3. Diluting the milk or gradually substituting water for milk makes the babies/children less reliant on a baby bottle for sleep.
4. The first visit to a pediatric dentist should be made at 6-12 months of age. It is the time when the baby' s teeth start to emerge.
5. For a child under 5 years old, having fluoride application on teeth by a pediatric dentist every 6 months is advised.
6. Try to make " tooth-brushing " fun!! A one-year-old child can "play" with a toothbrush, but children of this age still cannot clean their teeth perfectly. Parents should check and help brush their teeth again. The parents' care and attention helps the children develop a good habit of taking good care of their own teeth.

若有任何疑問，請不吝與我們聯絡
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