

6 Should I prevent my child from sucking his or her thumb?

Sucking is natural for children and is a source of comfort. Encourage your child to change the habit of thumb or finger sucking. It is better to offer them a pacifier because its use is easier to control. **It is best to help your child break this habit little by little, by 2 to 3 years of age.** It is important that it stop before the first adult teeth appear.



7 Is it a good habit to put my child to bed with a bottle?



The sugar contained in liquid beverages can cause cavities. A bottle of milk or juice can cause cavities, especially when taken often and for extended periods of time whether it be during the day or at night. **It is best to give your baby water or to comfort him/her as needed.**

8 Can I give my child snacks at will, and at any time?

Sugar that is eaten on several occasions throughout the day causes more cavities than if it is eaten all at once so **do not allow your child to snack all day long.** For cravings, choose foods that are less sweet such as fruit, vegetables or cheese. **Also avoid giving your child unlimited amounts of fruit juice even if they are made with 100% pure juice, because these natural juices still contain a lot of sugar.**



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DENTAL HEALTH

From 0 to 3 years of age
in 8 questions



Québec 



Habits that are taken early in your child's life are important because healthy baby teeth leads to a healthy mouth into adulthood.

As soon as baby's first teeth come in, cavities can develop quickly. Baby teeth are very susceptible to decay and since some of these teeth remain until 12 years of age, it is important to ACT EARLY!

1 When should I start cleaning my baby's mouth?

Before your baby has teeth, you can use a damp washcloth to clean his or her mouth. When the first teeth come in, use a small soft-bristled toothbrush and brush **twice daily**, using a fluoride toothpaste in the amount comparable to a grain of rice. If your child takes medicine that contains sugar, brush their teeth or rinse with water right after.



2 How to relieve teething pain?

By using your fingers or a washcloth soaked in cold water to massage your baby's gums. A teething ring is often well accepted by babies. **Caution: teething biscuits are not recommended because they contain sugar and could cause cavities.**

3 Can I pass on cavities to my baby?

Putting a pacifier or a utensil in your mouth and then putting it into your child's mouth **can transmit cavity-causing bacteria**. The risks are higher if you regularly have cavities yourself or if you and your baby have mouth-to-mouth contact.

4 When should I make a first dentist appointment?

As soon as you have questions or concerns about your baby's dental care or oral health. **The first visit is recommended at the age of one year** and the examination is covered by the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ).

5 How do I recognize that my baby is starting to develop a cavity?

A change in tooth colour or brownish, yellowish or dull white spots on the teeth could indicate the beginning of a cavity. **Once a month, lift the child's lips away from the teeth and inspect the teeth, especially close to the gum-line.**

