

## After Your Baby Is Born

- ◆ Maintain good oral health by brushing twice a day and flossing once a day. Use toothpaste with fluoride.
- ◆ Eat healthy foods and eat foods containing sugar at mealtimes only.
- ◆ Germs that cause tooth decay can pass from your mouth to your baby's mouth through saliva. Use different spoons to taste your baby's food. Clean your baby's pacifier with water. Do not use your mouth to clean it.



This brochure was adapted, with permission, from Holt K, Clark M. 2008. *Two Healthy Smiles: Tips to Keep You and Your Baby Healthy*. Washington, D.C.: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center.

## Caring for Your Baby's Teeth and Gums

- ◆ Clean your baby's gums with a clean, soft cloth or gauze after every feeding, even before the first teeth come in.
- ◆ Clean your baby's gums and teeth twice a day as soon as you see the first tooth (usually around 6 to 10 months). Use a clean, soft cloth, gauze or a small toothbrush with soft bristles designed for babies.
- ◆ Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle. Liquids such as milk, formula or fruit juice can cause early childhood tooth decay when allowed to cling to a baby's teeth for long periods. Consider offering your baby a pacifier at bedtime instead.
- ◆ Make an appointment for your baby to see a dentist by the time he or she is 1 year old.

For more information, contact:  
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NORTH DAKOTA  
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

# Healthy Smiles



**Tips To Keep You  
and Your Baby's  
Teeth and Gums  
Healthy**

# While You Are Pregnant

## Brush and Floss

- ◆ To prevent or control tooth decay, brush your teeth with a soft toothbrush and toothpaste with fluoride twice a day, and floss once a day.
- ◆ If you can't brush your teeth because you feel sick, rinse your mouth with water or a mouthrinse that has fluoride.
- ◆ If you vomit, rinse your mouth with a teaspoon of baking soda in a cup of water to prevent the acid from damaging your teeth.



## Get Dental Care

- ◆ Get a dental checkup. It is safe to have dental care when you are pregnant. Don't put it off until after you have the baby.
- ◆ Tell the dental office staff that you are pregnant and tell them your due date. This will help the dental team plan your treatment and keep you comfortable.
- ◆ The dental team may recommend fluoride rinses or chewing gum with xylitol. These can help reduce the bacteria that can cause tooth decay and gingivitis (sore, puffy and red gums).



## Eat Healthy Foods

- ◆ Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products like bread or crackers, dairy products like milk, yogurt or cheese, lean meats, fish, poultry, eggs, beans and nuts.
- ◆ Choose fruit rather than fruit juice to meet the daily recommended intake of fruit.
- ◆ Drink water or low-fat milk instead of fruit juice, sport drinks or soda.
- ◆ Cut down on sweets like candy, cookies, cake and sugary drinks. If and when you snack, choose nutritious foods that are low in sugar, have no sugar added or are unsweetened.
- ◆ Look for products (like chewing gum and mints) that are sugar-free or contain xylitol.
- ◆ For frequent nausea and vomiting, eat small amounts of nutritious foods throughout the day, if possible.

