

Myths & Misconceptions

Myth: Fluoride toothpaste is harmful to children.

Evidence shows that fluoride is actually extremely helpful for preventing cavities. A smear of toothpaste can be used for brushing or applied to the tooth surfaces after brushing.

Myth: Children don't have to go to the dentist until they start school.

It is actually recommended by most pediatric dentists that you bring a child in before they are 1 year old -- between 6 months and 1 year.

Myth: A mother's dental health does not affect her child's dental health.

Even before the baby's birth, parents and other caregivers should make sure their own mouths are as healthy as possible to reduce transmission of caries-causing harmful bacteria from their saliva to the newborn baby's mouth. Family members or caregivers should be counseled on ways to prevent the transmission.



The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide a resource for pediatricians to make timely referrals and give excellent consultation information to families and caregivers of infants.

Prepared by:

Emily Fall, Lindsey Gardner and
Joey Sorrentino.

UF College of Dentistry DMD Students

Under the supervision of:

Dr. Leda Mugayar

University of Florida
College of Dentistry
Department of Pediatric Dentistry



Infant Oral Health

Prevention Guide for Pediatricians



Lift the Lip & Look



Early Childhood Caries

Childhood caries is a **preventable** and **transmissible** infectious disease, caused by bacteria (eg, *Streptococcus mutans*) that form plaque on the surface of teeth.

Caries is the most common chronic disease in children.



Oral Examination - Lift the Lip & Look

Check the four top teeth in the front of the mouth. These are the areas where decay is most likely to begin.

If chalky white or brown areas are seen on the teeth, an **immediate referral** is necessary.

White or chalky areas in the surface of the enamel incipient decay and many of these lesions can be reversed with the application of fluoride varnish.

Brown areas of decay/cavitated lesions will probably require a filling to remove the decay and prevent further harm.

