Suggestions to comfort your baby at bedtime:

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

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

If your baby is used to sleeping all night at the breast, these suggestions can also help make the change to sleeping in his/her own bed easier.

Remember, you are making these changes out of love.

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

Developed by
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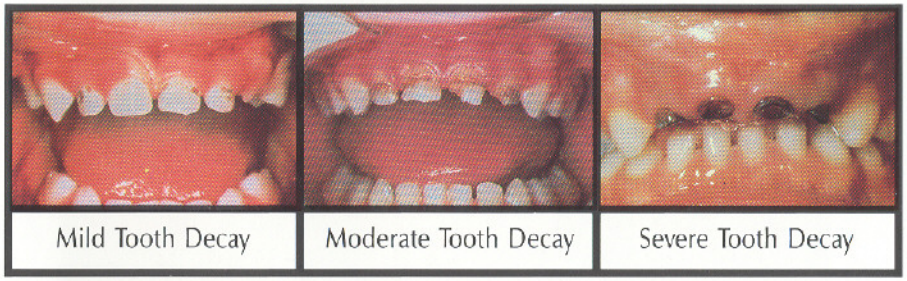
Keep Your Baby Smiling . . .

PREVENT BABY BOTTLE TOOTH DECAY

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 throughout the day?
- ☐ Use a pacifier dipped in sugar or honey?

If your child does one or more of the above, he/she may develop "baby bottle tooth decay."



Mild Tooth Decay	Moderate Tooth Decay	Severe Tooth Decay

Baby bottle tooth decay happens when liquids that contain sugar are left in a baby's mouth for a long time. Even breast milk and formula contain sugar.

Baby teeth are important. When they are decayed, a child may suffer 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.

Baby bottle tooth decay slides courtesy of North Carolina Department of Human Resources. Adapted from BBTD project materials developed by Headstart, IHS and CDC.

Start Early to Protect Your Child's Teeth

1. Put your child to bed without a bottle.*
2. Don't let your baby sleep all night at the breast.
3. Begin teaching your child to drink from a cup around six months of age. Start juice from a cup.

4. Avoid pop and other sweet drinks and don't let your child drink from a bottle all day long.
5. Wean your baby from the bottle by one year of age.
6. Clean your child's teeth and gums with a clean wash-cloth or a small, soft toothbrush before bedtime.
7. Check with your doctor or dentist to make sure your child is getting enough fluoride each day. Fluoride protects teeth from decay.

* If your baby must have a bottle to sleep, fill it with plain water. You may need to gradually dilute the bottle contents until only water is offered.

You Can Prevent Baby Bottle Tooth Decay and Keep Your Baby Smiling!