

What is Baby Bottle Tooth Decay (BBTC)?

Decay in infants and children

- Also known as nursing bottle decay, baby bottle syndrome, or early childhood cavities

It can destroy the teeth

- Most often occurs in the upper front teeth
- Other teeth may also be affected

Occurs when a child is put to bed with a bottle at night containing any sugar

- Formula, juice, milk, or soda (heaven forbid!)
- A breast fed child is only at risk for BBTC once other foods are introduced into the diet

Liquid pools around these teeth all night long feeding bacteria, causing decay

- Reduced saliva at night
- Reduced swallowing at night

Mild cases look like white spots/lines at the gumline

- Mild cases progress to severe cases in a short time
- Severe cases present with rotting, broken, black nubs of teeth remaining

Decay can start as soon as teeth erupt into the mouth, with severe cases seen as early as 18 months

How do I avoid BBTC?

Never put a child to bed with a bottle, find other ways to get your child to sleep at night

After night feedings, wipe out baby's mouth with wash cloth, soft toothbrush, or finger brush

Do not put juice or sugary liquid in sippy cup and allow child to carry around taking frequent sips

- Severely decayed front teeth can occur anytime frequent or night time sugars are given

Do not give child more than 4-6 oz of juice a day. Water is better.

Never give young children sodas

As an expectant mother or new mother, chew sugar free gum containing Xylitol

- Xylitol prevents transmission of bacteria from your mouth to your child's mouth

Why should I avoid BBTC?

Baby teeth are important

- These are the teeth he will have when personality and self-image are forming
- Baby teeth hold space for the permanent teeth, reducing the need for braces
- Important for speech and chewing
- Pain and suffering occur from cavities and toothaches
- Having severe decay as a young child is a risk factor for significant problems with cavities in adult and permanent tooth loss

Dental work necessary to fix BBTD is expensive

Reminder

Never put a child to bed with any sugary liquid or formula

Limit amount of juice (if any) given each day

Do not give young children and infants soda

It is not just what you give your child, but when and how often

Do not give child prolonged, frequent access to sugary liquids or formula

Schedule your baby's first visit to the dentist between the age of 2 - 3 to learn how to keep them cavity free!