

# Early Childhood Caries aka Baby Bottle Tooth Decay

Dental caries (or tooth decay) is the most common chronic disease in children. Tooth decay experienced by children before age 6 is specifically called early childhood caries, or more commonly, baby bottle tooth decay.

The more common name comes from the tooth decay most often being caused by babies and toddlers falling asleep with a bottle that contains a sweetened drink, such as fruit juices, formulas, or milk. Baby bottle tooth decay is highly preventable with good oral hygiene, feeding, and drinking habits and can be treated by a dentist.

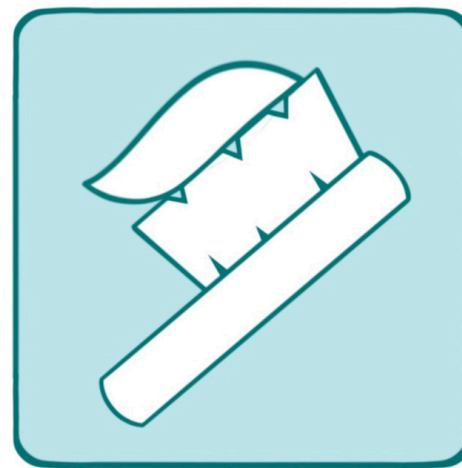


## What Causes Baby Bottle Tooth Decay?

- Frequent bottle feeding at night
- Exposure of teeth to cavity-causing bacteria
- Over eating and drinking sugary products
- Poor oral hygiene

## How to Prevent Baby Bottle Tooth Decay?

- Monitor your child when bottle feeding
- Regularly clean children's teeth and gums
- Remove the bottle when feeding is over
- Avoid prolonged pacifier use
- Do not dip pacifiers in honey or other sugary substances.



## How Dentists Treat Baby Bottle Tooth Decay

- Apply fluoride to remineralize teeth
- Remove decay and apply fillings
- Apply sealants to protect teeth from cavity-causing bacteria.
- Extract (or remove) the tooth in severe cases