Here's some ways you can help your child every step of the way:

Infant – up to 1 year

- Remember, tooth decay can be spread. Don't share things from your mouth with baby.
- Wipe out baby's mouth and gums with a clean, soft cloth or brush teeth and gums with a soft tooth brush twice a day.
- If a bottle must be used at bed or nap time, use water only.
- Begin using a cup at mealtimes when baby is about six months old.
- Take your child to the dentist at age 1.

Toddler – 1 to 3 years

- Brush your child's teeth 2 times a day with a grain of rice-size drop of fluoride tooth paste on a small toothbrush.
- No more bottles or sippy cups by 14 months.
- Look in your child's mouth for signs of tooth decay once a month or more.
- Avoid candy and sugar sweetened drinks such as juice, sport drinks, and soda pop.
- Take your child to the dentist two times each year.

Child – 3 to 8 years

- Help your child brush at least twice a day with a small pea-size drop of fluoride tooth paste.
- Floss your child's teeth daily.
- Avoid candy and sugar sweetened drinks such as juice, sport drinks, and soda pop.
- Take your child to the dentist two times each year.

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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For more information, please visit: doh.sd.gov/oralhealth

Tooth decay is 100% PREVENTABLE. HERE'S HOW.

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The ugly truth about tooth decay

Did you know tooth decay can spread from mouth to mouth? It's true! Don't share spoons or put the same things in your child's mouth that have been in yours.

Tooth decay is icky, sticky business! Baby teeth help your child eat and speak and guide adult teeth into the right place. They're just as important as adult teeth so keeping them healthy is a must!

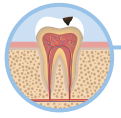
What CAUSES tooth decay?

bacteria + food = ACID →
ACID + tooth + time = CAVITY

Here's how you can spot tooth decay:

EARLY DECAY

- Tooth decay may first look like a small spot on the tooth.
- Lift your child's lips and look for white or brown spots on the teeth.



MODERATE DECAY

- Tooth decay may begin to make a hole in the tooth.
- A child may start to feel pain, mainly after eating or drinking hot or cold foods and beverages or sweets.

SEVERE DECAY

- As tooth decay gets worse a child will feel more pain.
- A young child may also be unable to eat or sleep.

ABSCESS

- If tooth decay is not treated, the root of the tooth dies.
- The pain may stop, but the infection continues to spread, creating an abscess and making the child sick. In some cases, the infection can cause death.

TOOTH DECAY
is the #1 CHRONIC childhood disease