

# KEEP YOUR CHILD CAVITY FREE

Advantage Dental Oral Health Center is here to help.



## CAVITIES CAN BE PREVENTED

Prevention is a team effort that starts with YOU, the caregiver.

- Cavities are holes in teeth. Holes are formed when cavity-causing bacteria feeds on sugars inside the mouth, producing acid that attack the teeth.
- Babies are not born with cavity causing bacteria.
- Bacteria transfers from infected caregivers to babies through saliva. For example, this can happen when a baby puts their hand in the caregiver's mouth, or when spoons are shared.
- Teeth are most at risk of harm or infection when they are just coming in.
- Cavities are most likely to appear between 15 and 18 months of age. Toddlers are at risk for decay because the protective layer of the tooth, called enamel, is still developing. That means, now is a critical time to make sure your child is seeing their dentist regularly to prevent cavities.

## HOW TO KEEP THE CHILD FROM GETTING CAVITIES

- **Don't Share Bacteria:** Sharing things that have been in someone else's mouth can pass cavity causing bacteria to the baby. Don't let adults or other children share spoons, straws, toothbrushes or anything that has been in someone else's mouth.
- **Don't Feed the Bacteria that Cause Decay:** Give the child's teeth a chance to get stronger. Instead of juice or sugary drinks, give the child water throughout the day and at bedtime/naptime.
- **Start Brushing the Child's Teeth with the Very First Tooth:** Brush the child's teeth/gums twice a day. Use a small, soft toothbrush and a "smear" of fluoride toothpaste.
- **Take Care of The Child's Teeth:** Dental visits and regular brushing with fluoride toothpaste can keep the child's teeth healthy. Children like to copy Mom and Dad, so be a good role model for brushing your teeth.
- **Spit Don't Rinse** and don't let your child play with or eat toothpaste.

\*Non-fluoride toothpaste and baby tooth gels do not work to prevent cavities.



Under 2 years = Smear



2 years and older = Pea sized

## BABY TEETH ARE IMPORTANT!

Call the child's dentist today to schedule a visit.

**866.268.9631**

If you are enrolled in Advantage Dental, you have a dentist.

Call Member Services to:

- Find your dental home.
- Get support making an appointment.
- Arrange transportation to your appointment.
- Arrange for an interpreter.

- **Prevention:** Dentists don't just fix teeth, they can help prevent tooth decay.
- **Dental Visit:** Take the child to the dentist when you see the first tooth, or by their 1st birthday.
- **Risk Assessment:** The dental team will assess the child's risk of developing cavities. A treatment plan will be provided to help protect teeth.
- **Frequency:** The child should be seen at least annually for a check-up, more frequently if they are at greater risk.
- **Being a Role Model:** Children like to copy Mom and Dad so be a good role model for tooth brushing.
- If you need help making a dental appointment or with transportation, call Member Services at: **866.268.9631**