

# A Healthy Smile for You and Your Family



# Your Teeth Are Important for:



Eating

Talking

The way you look

# Baby Teeth

Baby teeth are important too; they help children speak clearly and chew food and they serve as “space keepers” for the permanent teeth.



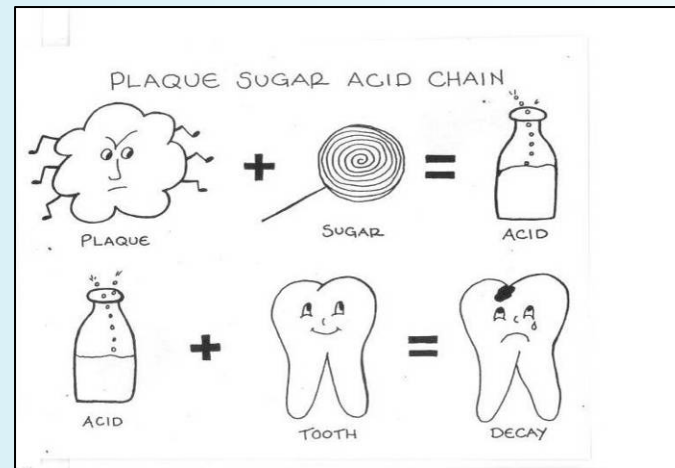
# Tooth Decay is an Infection

Tooth decay is caused by:

- Bacteria (germs) found in plaque\*
- Sugary foods and drinks
- Not brushing the teeth or brushing teeth improperly (which leaves germs)

\*PLAQUE is a film or coating which contains bacteria that forms on your teeth and gums.

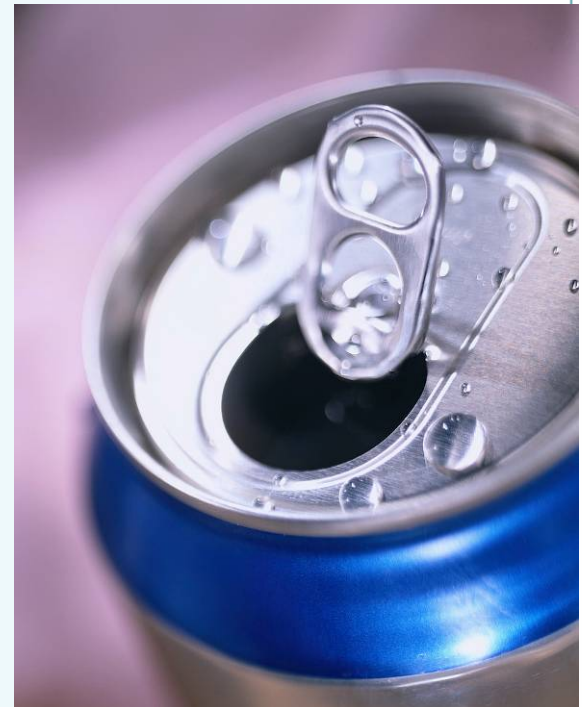
# An Acid Attack:



Acid produced by the bacteria in the plaque destroys the tooth's enamel (the hard outer covering of a tooth) and, after repeated attacks, creates a hole or "cavity."

# Soda Drinking

- Frequent soda drinking will increase the risk of tooth decay
- Sugar and acid combine with bacteria in the mouth to form more acid
- Even diet, sugar-free sodas contain acid which can harm your teeth



# Results of Tooth Decay:

- Pain and infection
- Difficulty speaking
- Difficulty chewing
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of self-esteem
- Lost work or school days
- Poor nutrition
- Expensive to fix

# Gum Disease



Photo courtesy of Dr. Walter Colon

This photo shows bacterial infection in the mouth caused by the build-up of plaque on the teeth and gums.

# Gum Disease



[www.doctorfernandofuentes.cl](http://www.doctorfernandofuentes.cl)

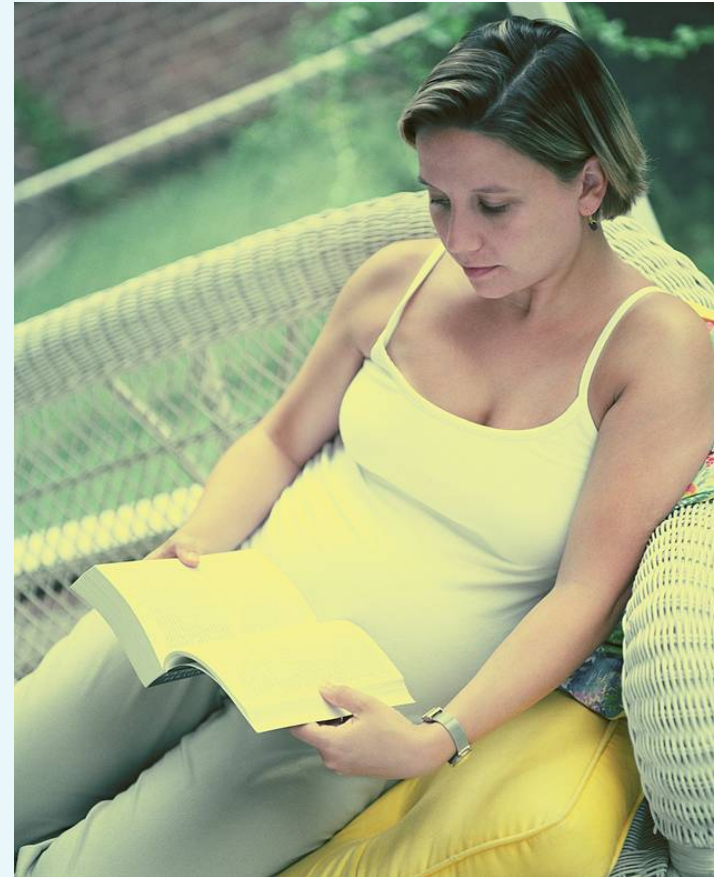
\*Gums that bleed when you floss or brush are not normal

\*Other signs of gum disease include:

- puffy gums
- red gums
- tender gums
- bad breath
- loose teeth

# Gum Disease During Pregnancy May Cause:

- **Premature babies**
  - Premature babies may have life-long problems
- **Low birth weight babies**
- **Diabetes**
  - Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to serious complications
- **Heart disease**
- **A tumor on your gums**



# Tooth Decay and Gum Disease

- It is best to treat before becoming pregnant
- Can be treated after becoming pregnant

# You Can Prevent Tooth Decay and Gum Disease by:



Brushing teeth twice a day

Flossing teeth once a day

Limiting the amount of sugar that you eat or drink

Getting teeth and gums checked at least once a year

# Proper Brushing



Tilt the brush at a 45° angle against the gumline.

Brushing only 2-3 teeth at a time, gently brush the outside, inside and chewing surfaces of all your teeth.

Use short back-and-forth or circular strokes.



Don't forget to brush your tongue to remove plaque (bacteria) and freshen your breath!

# Proper Flossing

Using your middle fingers, wrap about 18 inches of floss around them (but not too tightly).



Leave about an inch or two of floss between your hands. Use thumbs and pointer finger to grasp/guide floss.



Now, gently follow the curves of your teeth, sliding the floss up and down the tooth's surface a few times. Be sure to go below the gumline to clean out bacteria.

# Tips



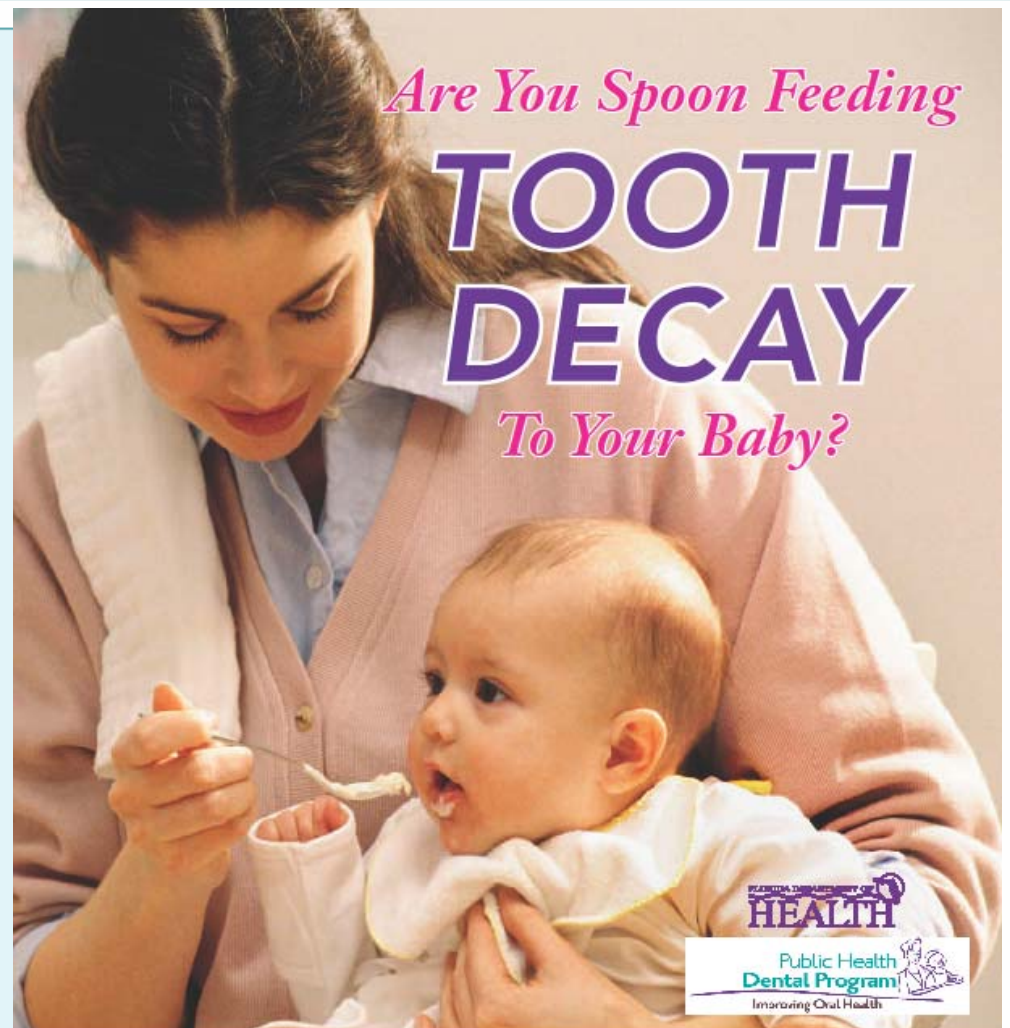
- Breastfeed your baby. Fully breastfed babies have fewer cavities than bottle fed babies.
- Don't put juice, soda or any sweetened drinks in baby's bottle or sippy cup
- Don't clean a baby's pacifier by putting it in your mouth
- Right from the start, clean your baby's gums and teeth with a soft, clean washcloth
- Don't put baby to bed with a bottle
- Wean your baby off the bottle by 14 months

# More Tips



- Don't share spoons or other utensils once they have been in your mouth
- Drink water or lowfat milk instead of sodas and other sugar-type drinks
- Avoid food high in sugar and foods that stick to your teeth
- Brush your child's teeth twice a day with a small "smear" of fluoride toothpaste
- Take your child to a dentist by their 1<sup>st</sup> birthday
- Talk to your child's dental or medical provider about fluoride varnishes
- Talk to a dental provider about sealants

Stop the spread of infection... tooth decay is an infection!



Sharing food, spoons and pacifiers with your baby transfers bacteria (germs) that cause tooth decay.

# Teeth Were Meant to Last a Lifetime...



So now  
it's up to you!

# Question

What did you see or learn here today that you will do at home?