

# Pointers for Parents

## Teaching Good Tooth Care Habits From The Start

(NAPSA)—There are a number of simple ways by which parents can help keep their children's teeth healthy. Yet the rate of cavities in baby teeth is on the rise, according to the most recent report on the topic from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In fact, over one-fourth of children 2 to 5 years old have cavities.

Dentists point to several contributing factors, including increased consumption of juices and soda. And while baby teeth will eventually wind up with the Tooth Fairy, cleaning the teeth and gums at an early age helps develop healthy habits for a lifetime of beautiful smiles.

Here are a number of tips for keeping their smiles healthy:

- Select a toothbrush with soft bristles.
- Encourage your toddler to engage in brushing his teeth twice a day.
- Bring along a “friend” to the bathroom sink—such as a favorite stuffed animal or doll—so the “friend” can also have his teeth brushed.
- Encourage toddlers to drink plenty of water after meals. This is especially important with toddlers who won't allow parents to brush their teeth as often as recommended.

While fluoride is an important and effective tool in the prevention of cavities, it can be a problem with young children who haven't learned to spit out toothpaste. Excessive consumption can result in fluorosis—an unsightly spotting of the permanent teeth. Until children are able to spit out



**Dentists recommend toddlers brush their teeth with a fluoride-free toothpaste.**

the toothpaste, parents should consider using a fluoride-free toothpaste.

Fluoride-free products such as Baby Orajel Tooth & Gum Cleanser are made with Microdent, a special ingredient that helps to remove plaque and prevent buildup with regular brushing. Recommended for babies 4 months and older, this cleanser contains no harsh abrasives and is safe if swallowed when used as directed.

Church & Dwight Co., Inc. also offers a fluoride-free option called Toddler Training Toothpaste, recommended for toddlers and children up to age 4. The nonfoaming paste is easy on their mouths and contains none of the common irritants in other toothpastes.

Both are safe if swallowed when used as directed.

For more information, visit [www.babyorajel.com](http://www.babyorajel.com).