

- Program: Dentistry
- Class: Pediatric Dentistry

# Early Childhood Caries

**Content aim:** students will be able to distinguish the characteristics between dental caries at an early age and dental caries after the age of five.

**Language aim:** students will be able to create a chart with the “do’s” and “don’ts” parents or caregivers should keep in mind to prevent and control Early Childhood Caries.

**Instructions:** complete this worksheet in groups of three students. Follow the directions given in each point.

**Names:** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## 1. Watch the video and answer the questions below.

### Fill in the blanks:

- The topic of the video is \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.
- At \_\_\_\_\_ months birth, teeth and \_\_\_\_\_ should be cleaned \_\_\_\_\_ a day with a clean gauze \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ cloth.
- Teeth should be brushed at least twice a day, in the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ going to \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ must be \_\_\_\_\_ that children should \_\_\_\_\_ the toothpaste and not \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- Early Childhood Caries could be produced when the child \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ with a \_\_\_\_\_.

### Answer the following questions.

- Who are responsible for the oral health care in small children? \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
- At what age, should parents begin brushing their children’s teeth? At \_\_\_\_\_ months.
- What happens at that age? The \_\_\_\_\_ erupts.

### Write F if the statement is false or T if it is true.

- In children aged 2 to 5, a “pea-size” amount of toothpaste should be used.
- It is essential to encourage children to drink from a cup to prevent early childhood caries.
- The first dental visit should be before the first molar erupts.

## 2. Drag and drop the word(s) into the box that better describes the picture.

Breastfeeding

Pea-sized amount

Smear



3. Read the following text, take notes as you read and discuss with your group the questions below.

“The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) defines early childhood caries (ECC) as the presence of one or more decayed (noncavitated or cavitated), missing (as a result of caries), or filled tooth surfaces in any primary tooth in a child 71 months of age or younger. AAPD also specifies that, in children younger than 3 years of age, any sign of *smooth-surface* caries is indicative of severe early childhood caries (S-ECC).

Research shows that human breastfeeding in infants has many advantages and has not been epidemiologically associated with caries in the absence of other factors such as poor oral hygiene or a carbohydrate diet. Frequent night-time bottle feeding with milk is associated with, but not consistently implicated in, S-ECC. Breast-feeding more than seven times daily after 12 months of age is associated with increased risk for ECC. Night-time bottle feeding with juice, repeated use of a sippy or no-spill cup, and frequent between-meal consumption of sugar-containing snacks or drinks (e.g., juice, formula, soda) will increase the risk of caries. The clinical appearance of the teeth in S-ECC in a child 2, 3, or 4 years of age is typical and follows a definite pattern. There is early carious involvement of the *maxillary anterior teeth, the maxillary and mandibular first primary molars*, and sometimes the mandibular canines (Fig. 9-2). The mandibular incisors are usually unaffected. A discussion with the parents often reveals an inappropriate feeding pattern: the child has been put to bed at afternoon nap time and/or at night with a bottle holding milk or a sugar-containing beverage. The child falls asleep, and the liquid becomes pooled around the teeth (the lower anterior teeth tend to be protected by the tongue). The carbohydrate-containing liquid provides an excellent culture medium for acidogenic microorganisms. Salivary flow is also decreased during sleep, and clearance of the liquid from the oral cavity is slowed.

AAPD endorses the policy statement of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) on breastfeeding and the use of human milk. The AAP statement includes the acknowledgment that “breast-feeding ensures the best possible health as well as the best development and psychosocial outcomes for the infant.” However, both organizations discourage extended or excessive frequency of feeding times (from the breast or bottle) and encourage appropriate oral hygiene measures for infants and toddlers.”



“Figure 9-2. Left, Early childhood caries (ECC). Right, ECC and evidence of dental neglect in a preschool child.”

Text and images taken from *Dental Caries in the Child and Adolescent*. In: Dean JA, Avery DR, McDonald RE. *McDonald and Avery's Dentistry for the Child and Adolescent*. Tenth Edition. Elsevier: St. Louis; 2016. p. 158-159.

- Does ECC refer to dental caries experience?
- What does “smooth-surface” mean?
- What is the typical pattern of ECC?
- Why are the mandibular teeth usually unaffected in ECC?
- What does “dental neglect” mean?

4. Create a chart with advice for parents regarding prevention and control of ECC.

	Do's	Don'ts
Oral health measures		
Feeding / food		
Dental visit		
Use of fluoride		
Thumbsucking / pacifier		