National Children’s Dental Health Month

Tooth decay is a common, preventable problem yet more than a quarter of U.S. children, ages 2 through 5, and half of youths aged 12 to 15 are experiencing tooth decay.

To protect children’s teeth, the Health Department recommends the following:

- Infants up to age 2 should not be allowed to go to sleep with a bottle of milk or other liquid (other than water), which promotes tooth decay. Clean an infant's mouth with a soft cloth or infant toothbrush.
- Children's teeth should be brushed twice a day. That includes children ages 2 to 5 years old.
- Children can usually floss their own teeth when they reach fourth grade. Prior to that, parents can floss their children's teeth using a special fork-shaped tool.
- Use fluoridated toothpaste (make sure the ingredients include fluoride).
- Make sure that fluoride is in your drinking water. For those who are on a private well, the water should be tested to determine the natural level of fluoride. If that level is too low fluoride tablets can be added.
- Consider having your dentist or health care provider apply a fluoride varnish to the teeth to prevent decay.
- Children should avoid large amounts of sweets.
- All children should avoid carbonated drinks, which are bad for the teeth.
- Have a dentist apply a dental sealant on the first molars of 6 and 7 year old children. This protects the top of the tooth from decay. It is also good to have sealants placed when children are 12 to 13 years of age on their second molars.
- School age children, in addition to brushing and flossing, should chew gum with xylitol, a "tooth friendly" sugar free sweetener.
- If your child participates in sports, protect the teeth with a mouth guard.

Just a reminder that insurance cards must be presented at every appointment. Please remember to confirm your appointment texts and e-mails. Please inform us of any changes to your address or phone numbers.