

## Preventing Infant Tooth Decay

This fact sheet has been designed to help aid you in ensuring your child has healthy teeth all their life.

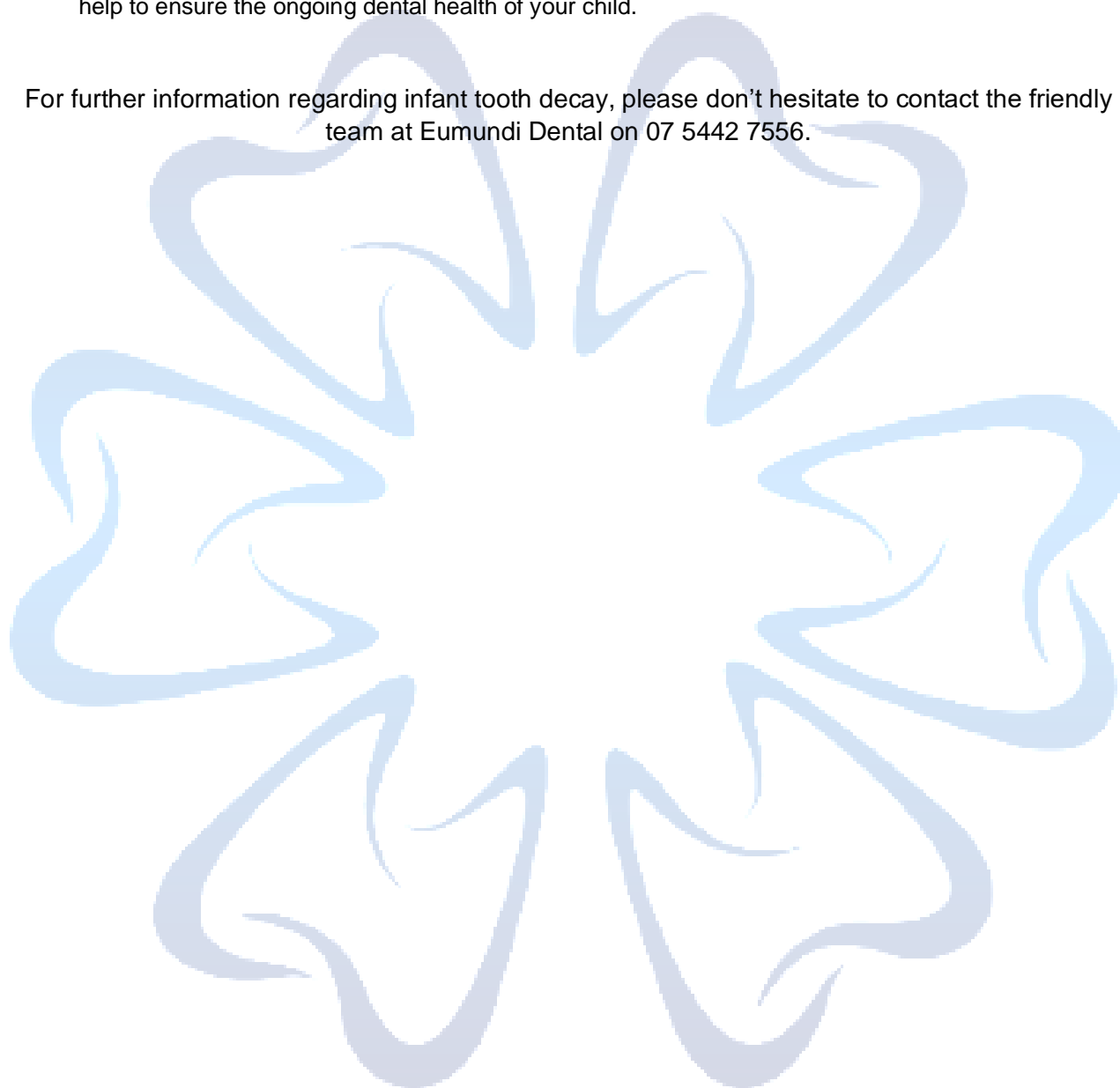


- Although breast feeding is the best for your baby, we fully understand that for some women this just isn't an option. If you are bottle feeding your child, it is important to give the bottle at feed times or when he or she is hungry. Once your child has finished feeding then the bottle should be taken away. Letting your child walk around with the bottle in their mouth means that the teeth are being exposed to the sugars in the milk for extended periods of time.
- Using a damp cloth to wipe over your baby's gums after feeding allows your child to get used to having their mouth cleaned after feed time. Once your child gets teeth, a small headed infant toothbrush should be introduced, you can choose to use toothpaste if you wish. Don't be surprised though if your child just sucks the toothpaste off, and due to this if toothpaste is being used only use a small amount.
- If you are putting your baby to bed with a bottle, it is essential that the bottle only be filled with water.
- We understand that it may be tempting to place cordial, soft drink or juice into your baby's bottle, but these are all full of sugar which will lead to dental decay.
- Teddy bears, blankets, reading a book or singing a lullaby are great alternatives to offer comfort to your child at bedtime.
- It is suggested that you try to introduce your child to a cup at six months of age.
- By 12 months of age, encourage your child to become bottle free. If bottle free can't be achieved then try reducing the number of bottle feeds as much as possible.
- Although dummies can cause dental issues, if your child does use one is imperative that you do not add any flavouring such as honey or syrup.
- Encourage your child to drink water when they are thirsty.

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- Remember that if your child is struggling with sleep there are a number of avenues. Consulting with your GP, child health nurse or a sleep practitioner, will give you guidance how to help your child to sleep through the night without the help of a bottle.
- Remember infant tooth decay is a preventable disease. Dentists encourage parents to bring their children to the dentist from the age of 12 months. Working with your friendly dental practitioner will help to ensure the ongoing dental health of your child.

For further information regarding infant tooth decay, please don't hesitate to contact the friendly team at Eumundi Dental on 07 5442 7556.



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