

## Media Release

March 28, 2013

### April is Oral Health Month! First Birthday – First Visit

Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday Baby! Who's your dentist? Hmm...maybe not the top thing on a one year old's mind, but did you know that babies should see a dental health professional by age one? The Canadian Dental Association recommends that all children see a dental health professional by age one. This helps to spot potential problems at early stages when treatment is most simple. Baby teeth can decay quickly, and are very important for a child's speech and nutrition.

This first dental appointment can seem overwhelming to parents, especially if they have any anxiety surrounding the issue themselves. Having your little one see a dentist early helps to develop a worry-free dental relationship, and save money.

What can you expect at that first appointment? Baby will most likely be in your arms while the dentist or dental hygienist has a look in their mouth. They will lift up the lip to check the front teeth and look for any signs of decay. This is a great time to ask any questions you may have, such as how and when to clean baby's mouth, what are tooth-friendly snacks, and talk about fluoride. They may discuss how to reduce the risk of decay for your baby and provide a quick and easy fluoride varnish if needed.

Tooth decay is the second most common childhood disease. Seeking dental care early can prevent this problem and give your child a lifetime of healthy smiles. Call your dental provider today to book that first appointment. If you do not have a family dental provider, contact the Health Unit at 1-800-660-5853.

Want to know if your baby is at risk for decay? Go to [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org) and click on the interactive quiz to help you decide.

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