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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

REGION V

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60608

MAY
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PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

MAY 13 1986

April 30, 1986



Sonia M. Leon Reig
Deputy Director
Office of Migrant Health
BHCD
Room 7A-55
Parklawn Building
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Dear Ms. Reig:

I wanted to take time to thank you for the opportunity to moderate and present, at the recent Migrant Health Conference in Minneapolis. I was most impressed with the organization of the conference in general and more specifically with both the quantity and quality of the dental sessions. The attendance at the dental sessions was excellent. Also, enclosed you will find a copy of the prenatal "lesson plan" I have developed, that has been forwarded to C/MCH's Region V, as you requested. Again congratulations on an excellent conference and if I can be of any assistance in future conferences please let me know.

Sincerely,

Stephen W. Wyatt

Stephen W. Wyatt, D.M.D
Region V Dental Consultant

Dental Health Education Outline for Prenatal Programs

Resource ID#: 533

Dental Health Education Outline for Prenatal Programs:

I. INTRODUCTION

The need for good nutrition, good oral hygiene and dental care is even more important during pregnancy. Not only do the above affect the general health of the mother-to-be, they also impact upon the general and dental health of the unborn baby.

II. NUTRITION

In order to insure good overall health for the mother-to-be and to aid in the proper development of the baby's teeth and jaws, a well balanced diet with the proper amounts and types of foods is essential.

A. Nutrients essential for proper development of baby's teeth and jaws:

- a. Vitamins: A, C, and D.
- b. Minerals: Calcium and Phosphorous.

B. Sources of the above nutrients:

- a. Vitamin A- Liver, milk, sweet potatoes and dark green leafy vegetables.
- b. Vitamin C- Oranges, tangerines, white potatoes, broccoli and tomatoes.
- c. Vitamin D- Fish and milk.
- d. Calcium- Milk and cheese.
- e. Phosphorous- Milk, chicken, fish and cheese.

III. FLUORIDE

Fluoride is a naturally occurring substance in some foods and many water supplies. Fluoride is very important in the prevention of tooth decay, in that it makes the teeth more resistant to decay, by essentially making the tooth harder. Since a baby's teeth begin to develop at about the third month of a pregnancy and this development will continue for many years, it is very important that the young infant receive enough fluoride, beginning at an early age, in order to receive all the benefits that fluoride has to offer. There are two basic ways by which the teeth receive fluoride and these are;

A. Systemic Fluorides- Examples are the fluoride in drinking water and prescription fluoride tablets. Systemic fluorides enter the blood stream and are carried to the teeth and bones. Fluoride in the drinking water may either be naturally occurring or it may be added into community water supplies. In order to obtain the greatest benefit from water fluoridation, it is very important that the drinking water contain the right amounts of fluoride, thus you may want to check with local water districts to determine fluoride concentration in your area. Fluoride containing vitamins have been shown to be a very effective method of delivering sytemic fluorides to the young infant. One note about systemic fluorides is that there is no evidence that fluoride vitamins taken prenatally, are of any benefit.

B. Topical Fluorides- Topical fluoride is the type that is obtained from fluoride mouthrinses and fluoride containing toothpaste. Topical fluorides have their preventive effect by directly contacting the tooth, and thus hardening the enamel. Fluoride mouthrinses should not be used by children under the age of six, because young children have a tendency to swallow too much of the rinse. Topical fluoride can also be obtained through a professional application by your dentist or dental hygienist.

If you have questions, about the fluoride needs of both you and your baby, you should ask your physician and/or dentist.

IV. BABY BOTTLE TOOTH DECAY

Did you know that milk, formula and fruit juices all contain sugars that can cause tooth decay? Thus, if a baby is given a bottle at nap or bedtime and the fluid is allowed to contact the teeth for long periods of time, their chances of developing tooth decay are greatly increased. Baby bottle caries is caused by frequent exposure to sugars and it can be serious enough to affect both the child's oral and general health. Some preventive steps to follow are:

- A. Avoid long periods of bottle nursing, especially at nap or bedtime.
- B. Avoid pacifiers dipped in honey or other sweetened substances.
- C. Clean the child's teeth on a daily basis. You may want to use a washcloth to clean the baby's teeth as soon as they erupt, until you can use a toothbrush to effectively clean the young child's teeth. One important point to emphasize, is that toothbrushing is a very difficult task for a child and the parent may need to assist the child for several years to insure that an adequate job is being done.
- D. If you notice dark areas on your baby's teeth take them to the dentist for a professional check-up.

V. THE IMPORTANCE OF BABY TEETH

Although the child will lose his/her baby teeth , they are still extremely important. Thus, the baby teeth should be cared for in the same manner as the permanent teeth. This includes proper brushing and flossing, along with proper amounts of fluoride and regular visits to the dentist, starting at age two. Listed below are a few reasons why baby teeth are needed;

- A. Baby teeth provide a space for the permanent teeth that will follow in their place. Early loss of baby teeth may cause crowding of the permanent teeth later in life.
- B. The baby teeth are important in helping your child's speech develop properly.
- C. Baby teeth are essential in allowing your child to eat their food, thus obtaining the necessary nutrients for growth and development.

VI. THUMBSUCKING

The sucking reflex is one of a baby's natural reflexes, however thumbsucking can have a bad effect on the position of the baby's teeth, thus possibly causing an unsightly appearance. It is especially important that a child stop sucking their thumb before their permanent teeth begin to erupt, about age six. A pacifier in the shape of the natural nipple would be a satisfactory alternative to satisfy the sucking urge of the baby.

VII. DENTAL TREATMENT DURING PREGNANCY

Regular dental visits should be continued throughout the pregnancy, with special emphasis placed upon preventive care, so that emergency or pain relieving treatment can be avoided. The presence of plaque on the teeth will always cause irritation of the gums, often making them red, tender and likely to bleed easily. However, during pregnancy this gum irritation or gingivitis, may occur more frequently due to an increase in hormone levels. This increase in hormone levels causes an exaggerated tissue response to occur in the gums, in response to the presence of plaque. Thus, it is even more important during the pregnancy to have good oral hygiene, in the form of proper brushing and flossing techniques.

Dental x-rays are an important diagnostic tool, in the detection of dental disease and during pregnancy they may be necessary, but they should be kept to a minimum. With the presence of modern x-ray equipment and film, along with the use of a lead apron, x-rays during pregnancy are considered to be safe.

Certain drugs and anesthetics can be used safely during pregnancy, your dentist through the use of a thorough health history and consultation with your physician, will determine what procedures and drugs that can be used, at different times during your pregnancy.

There is no truth to the old wives' tale that a tooth is lost for every baby. Factors that cause tooth decay are the same during pregnancy as other times during your life.

Finally, the last several months of a pregnancy may be a very uncomfortable time for the mother-to-be to sit in the dental chair for extended periods of time. Thus, for both your peace of mind and comfort, the fourth to the sixth months of a pregnancy are usually the best time for treatment.

Reference Sources For a Prenatal Dental Health Education Program:

Listed below are several pamphlets, available for purchase, from the American Dental Association, which your site might want to consider including in your prenatal information packets.

Source: 1985/86 American Dental Association Catalog

Enclosed you will find an order blank which you can forward to the ADA to request a sample of the pamphlets, which you might want to consider for use at your site.

Topic: Fluoride

Pamphlet: Fluoride Helps Prevent Tooth Decay

Page 2

W109- 500 copies/\$46.20

or

Pamphlet: Why We Recommend Fluoridation

Page 2

W102- 500 copies/\$31.50

Topic: Diet

Pamphlet: Diet and Dental Health

Page 3

W159- 500 copies/\$108.90

Topic: Oral Hygiene

Pamphlet: Cleaning Your Teeth and Gums

Page 5

W135- 500 copies/\$92.40

or

Pamphlet: Do Your Gums Bleed When You Brush Your Teeth?

W140- 500 copies/\$75.55

Topic: Baby Bottle Tooth Decay

Pamphlet: Nursing Bottle Mouth

Page 10

W166 or W167- 500 copies/\$85.25

Topic: Children's Teeth

Pamphlet: Your Child's Teeth

Page 11

W177 or W198- 500 copies/\$160.80

or

Pamphlet: Help Your Child Have A Healthy Smile

Page 11

W138- 500 copies/\$150.85

American Dental Association
Order Department
211 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Dear Sirs:

I am requesting that you forward a sample of the pamphlets checked below, for our review and consideration in the development of a dental health education packet, to be used in our health center's prenatal education program

- _____ Fluoride Helps Prevent Tooth Decay- W109
- _____ Why We Recommend Fluoride- W102
- _____ Diet and Dental Health- W159
- _____ Cleaning Your Teeth and Gums- English W135
- _____ Cleaning Your Teeth and Gums- Spanish W136
- _____ Do Your Gums Bleed When You Brush Your Teeth?- English W140
- _____ Do Your Gums Bleed When You Brush Your Teeth?- Spanish W197
- _____ Nursing Bottle Mouth- English W166
- _____ Nursing Bottle Mouth- Spanish W167
- _____ Your Child's Teeth- English W177
- _____ Your Child's Teeth- Spanish W198
- _____ Help Your Child Have a Healthy Smile- W138

Mail To:
