

Breastfeeding and dental caries

Abstract

Breastfeeding is considered the ideal food in early life. It contains nutrients, hydration and immune protection, as well as other benefits for the baby and mother. However, breast milk has been identified as a risk factor for dental caries. The aim of this paper is to present, through a literature review, studies that prove or refute the relationship between breastfeeding and dental caries, as well as to identify the risk-benefit ratio of breastfeeding in pediatric dentistry. It was concluded that breastfeeding for more than 12 months of age, in high frequency, especially at night, and with complementary feeding, in which sugary foods and drinks are commonly consumed, can trigger tooth decay. Then the baby should have his first dental appointment at about six months of age, the age at which the first deciduous teeth eruption. Thus, pediatric dentists should guide and perform procedures to prevent caries and other oral problems, as well as encourage and encourage breastfeeding, as the benefits offered by breastfeeding are essential to individuals and will have repercussions throughout their lives.

Descriptors: Breastfeeding. Dental cavity. Pediatric dentistry.

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