



Dr Cameron Arnold | Smile Dental

Smile for life

The foundations for good oral health are laid before we're born.

As my wife Sarah and I have recently had child number five, babies are once again one of the key topics of discussion. But I'm always talking about babies in my line of work – stressing to new parents, and parents-to-be just how important pre- and post-natal care are for the healthy development of their baby's mouth, jaw and long-term oral health. Good oral health and a sound bite have their foundation in utero and during early infancy.

The full, correct and healthy development of the mouth and jaw are essential for effective feeding, breathing and facial development. Breastfeeding and good nutrition play essential roles. Factors such as thumb sucking, mouth breathing, tongue-ties and enlarged adenoids can have a serious impact on a child's oral health, general health and facial development.

Problems in the child's early development can have a lifetime's impact on the adult. Your dentist can help as you may recall from our happily ending tongue-tie story about baby Thomas (from the August issue of DUO).

Most of us at Smile Dental are parents. In fact, our children outnumber us! So we're passionate about infant oral health and educating mums and dads. We have developed special oral hygiene plans for expectant mums because a woman's oral health can take a hammering during pregnancy. We have produced detailed information brochures on infant oral health and oral health care during pregnancy. And we recently conducted a community information night to share our knowledge with



the public. We dispelled a few myths and shed new light on topics such as fluoride, breastfeeding, dummies and teats. It was so popular, we'll be doing another one in the near future. Please call for details if you're interested – it's open to all.

Oh and Sarah and baby Beatrice are doing very nicely, thank you. In fact, that's them in the photo!

Dr Cameron Arnold is principal dentist at Smile Dental.
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DID YOU KNOW?

- The germs that cause decay and gum disease can be passed on from caregiver to baby, mainly by the mum. So don't clean the dummy with your own mouth!
- A restricted airway, the common cause of mouth breathing in children, can lead to a high and narrow palate, crowded teeth, weak chin and sleep disorders.
- Breastfeeding promotes the full and correct forward growth of the baby's lower jaw and the expansion of the palate. This, in turn, promotes the full and correct development of the teeth, jaw and bite.
- Early orthodontic intervention for incorrect jaw and bite development can save your child from years of problems, ranging from headaches to teeth grinding, later on in life.