Babies are not born with the germs that cause cavities

Germs that cause tooth decay are passed on to children from their caregivers between the age of 6 months and 2 ½ years.

Caregivers need to keep their own levels of decay-causing germs low so that fewer are passed on to their child. Caregivers can do this by:

- Flossing daily
- Brushing thoroughly for 2 to 3 minutes twice a day with fluoride toothpaste
- Having regular dental check-ups to treat tooth decay or gum disease

To stop infecting your child with decay-causing germs, avoid the following:

- Allowing your baby to put fingers in a caregiver’s mouth and then back into their own
- Blowing on your baby’s food to cool it
- Cleaning pacifier or bottle nipple in your mouth
- Sharing utensils such as spoons
- Testing the temperature of food by tasting it from your baby’s spoon

Cavities are Contagious

Photo courtesy of Microsoft Clipart

Adapted from Cypress Hills Health Region