

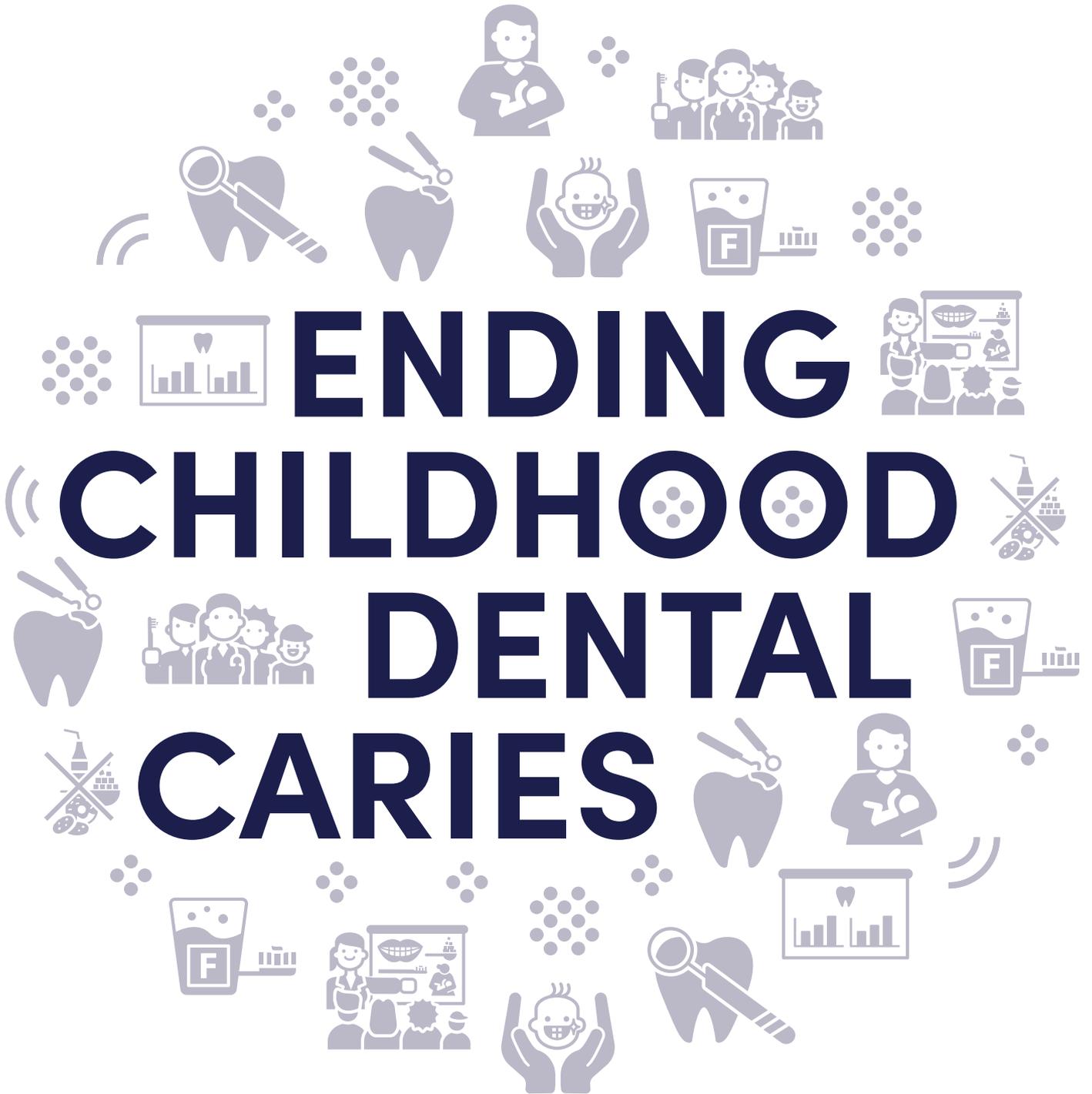
ENDING CHILDHOOD DENTAL CARIES

WHO Implementation manual

Oral Health Programme, Prevention of Noncommunicable Diseases
WHO Headquarters



World Health
Organization



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Glossary

Atraumatic restorative treatment (ART) This is a minimally invasive technique to treat existing dental decay and prevent further decay. ART can be used with patients of all ages (e.g. children, adolescent, adults and elderly people). It consists of two activities: The first is a procedure to treat decayed tooth cavities by removing the decay using hand instruments; this is followed by filling the cavities and any adjacent pits and fissures on biting surfaces of the teeth with an adhesive material containing fluoride (glass-ionomer cement). The provision of ART is not limited to dental clinics since it does not require a dental chair, drill, piped water or electricity. Moreover, pain is rare during ART, virtually eliminating the need for anaesthetic. Although ART is ideally delivered by an oral health professional or auxiliary, trained primary care workers are also able to deliver ART effectively with the appropriate instruments and consumables.

Caries prevalence Proportion of population affected by dental caries.

Caries severity Mean number of teeth affected by caries per person in the population.

Community health workers People who provide health education, referral and follow-up, case management, basic preventive health care, and home visiting services to specific communities. Community health workers provide support and assistance to individuals and families in navigating health and social services systems. Community health workers are known by many different names in different countries, but in almost all cases they come from the communities they serve.

Complementary foods Foods that should be added to a child's diet when breast milk is no longer enough to meet the child's nutritional needs. The transition from exclusive breastfeeding to family foods, referred to as complementary feeding, typically covers the period from age 6 months to 18–24 months.¹

Dental caries Dental decay. Destruction of teeth results when microbial biofilm (plaque) formed on the tooth surface converts the sugars contained in foods and drinks into acids, which dissolve tooth enamel and dentine over time.

Early childhood caries Caries characterized by the presence of one or more teeth affected by carious lesions or with white spot lesions in primary teeth, loss of teeth due to caries, or filled tooth surfaces in affected teeth of a child aged under six years. Children with early childhood caries have been shown to have a high number of teeth affected by progressive disease.

Healthy foods Foods that contribute to a healthy diet if consumed in appropriate amounts.²

Impact of early childhood caries Sequelae caused by early childhood caries for the infant or child, family and community.

Infant A child aged under 12 months.

¹ Complementary feeding. Geneva: World Health Organization (https://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/complementary_feeding/en/).

² Healthy diet. Fact sheet 394. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2015 (https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/nutrientrequirements/healthydiet_factsheet394.pdf).

Primary care A key process in the health system: first-contact, accessible, continued, comprehensive and coordinated care. First-contact care is accessible at the time of need; ongoing care focuses on the long-term health of a person rather than the short duration of the disease; comprehensive care is a range of services appropriate to the common problems in the respective population; coordination is the role by which primary care acts to coordinate other specialists that the person may need. Primary care is a subset of primary health care.³

Primary health care A whole-of-society approach to health and well-being centred on the needs and preferences of individuals, families and communities. It addresses the broader determinants of health and focuses on the comprehensive and interrelated aspects of physical, mental and social health and well-being. It provides whole-person care for health needs throughout the lifespan rather than treating only a set of specific diseases. Primary health care ensures people receive comprehensive care – ranging from promotion and prevention to treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care – as close as feasible to people’s everyday environment.⁴

Systemic fluoride Fluoride ingested and absorbed into the body.

Topical fluoride Fluoride applied directly on to teeth.

Unhealthy foods Energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods such as foods high in saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, free sugars or salt.⁵

Universal health coverage Universal health coverage means that all individuals and communities receive the health services they need without financial hardship. It includes the full spectrum of essential good-quality health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care. Universal health coverage enables everyone to access the services that address the most significant causes of disease and death, and ensures the quality of those services is good enough to improve the health of the people who receive them.⁶

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