

# Research Shows Cavity-Causing Bacteria Transfer from Non-Relative Child to Child

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Research taking place at the University of Alabama at Birmingham Department of Biology and School of Dentistry is showing the transmission of *S. mutans* not only occurs from mother to child, but from child-to-child (non-relatives) as well. Sharing spoons and toys in the daycare center or nursery at church may be the reason “72 percent of children harbored at least one strain of the cavity-causing *Streptococcus mutans* not found in any cohabiting family members.” Primary researcher Stephanie Momeni stated: “While the data supports that *S. mutans* is often acquired through mother-to-child interactions, the current study illuminates the importance of child-to-child acquisition of *S. mutans* strains and the need to consider these routes of transmission in dental caries risk assessments, prevention and treatment strategies.”



Educating parents on the importance of limiting sharing of things like pacifiers, utensils, sippy cups and straws at daycare and home may be beneficial to share based on these findings. Also, asking parents if their children participate in daycare-like settings may be worth considering as it appears to have the potential to be a significant risk factor for dental caries.