

1 **Definition of early childhood caries (ECC)**

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3 **Originating Committee**

4 Council on Clinical Affairs

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6 **Adopted**

7 2003

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9 Early childhood caries (ECC) is the presence of 1 or more decayed (noncavitated or
10 cavitated lesions), missing (due to caries) or filled tooth surfaces in any primary tooth in
11 a child 71 months of age or younger. In children younger than 3 years of age, any sign of
12 smooth-surface caries is indicative of severe early childhood caries (S-ECC). From ages 3
13 through 5, 1 or more cavitated, missing (due to caries) or filled smooth surfaces in
14 primary maxillary anterior teeth, or a decayed, missing or filled score of ≥ 4 (age 3), ≥ 5
15 (age 4) or ≥ 6 (age 5) surfaces constitutes S-ECC.