

## When Teething Happens<sup>1</sup>

Most babies will develop teeth between 6 and 12 months. Typically, the first teeth to come in are almost always the lower front teeth (the lower central incisors), and most children will usually have all their baby teeth by age 3. All of that drooling at around 3 months, doesn't necessarily mean they are teething.

## Why Baby Teeth are Important<sup>2</sup>

1. Important for child's health and development.
2. Help child to chew, speak, and smile.
3. Hold space in jaw for permanent teeth (without them, permanent teeth can drift into the empty space making it hard for other adult teeth to find room).
4. Without them, teeth will grow in crooked or crowded

## Teething Symptoms<sup>3,4</sup>

- Fever – may have very slight increase in temperature as teeth break through
- Fussiness
- Trouble sleeping
- Loss of appetite
- Drooling more than usual

## Teething and Breastfeeding

If you're breastfeeding and your baby isn't interested in a teething toy but more interested in chewing on your nipples or your arms, especially around the time of feeding, **massage your baby's gums with your fingers dipped in cool water prior to starting a feeding**. When the baby is breastfeeding, his tongue extends beyond the bottom gum to draw in the nipple. This helps cushion the nipple from the edges of the new baby teeth.

### Before Nursing:<sup>4</sup>

- Offer soothing techniques to numb

### During Nursing:<sup>4</sup>

- Try different positions to change pressure points
- Act Fast! Observe baby's jaw and remove before baby can bite
- Break suction if baby becomes fidgety
- Use a cue word, like "no bite" as you break the suction to teach baby not to bite
- If baby bites, break suction and hand baby the teether or wet washcloth to chew on.

### After Nursing:<sup>4</sup>

- i. **Avoid bottles and pacifiers because they will not protest if bitten or chewed on.**

## Soothing Do's<sup>7</sup>

- Let your baby gnaw on your fingers (if his or her teeth haven't come through) or rub your baby's gums with your clean fingers for comfort.
- Teething Toys chilled in the fridge or freezer
- Frozen fruit (for baby's older than 6 months)
- Let baby gnaw on a cotton sock rolled up or a washcloth
- Massage or gently rub using your finger or knuckle
- Keep to usual bedtime routine<sup>8</sup>
- Brush your baby's teeth as soon as they appear

## Soothing Don'ts<sup>9,10,11</sup>

- Teething Necklaces, bracelets, and Beads can pose choking and strangulation hazards
- Plastic teething rings with liquids could build up bacteria in the liquid, and babies could bite through to the liquid.
- Medications aren't very helpful because drooling washes it away<sup>12</sup>
- FDA recommends parents don't use benzocaine products for children under age two

### Resources:

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2. American Dental Association, "Baby Teeth", Mouth Healthy, <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/b/baby-teeth>, accessed 12/1/21
3. American Academy of Pediatrics, "Baby Teething Pain," 12/20/2018, <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/Pages/Teething-Pain.aspx>, accessed 12/1/21
4. American Dental Association, "Teething", Mouth Healthy, <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/t/teething>, accessed 12/1/21
5. Swanson, MD, MBE, FAAP, Wendy Sue, "How to Help Teething Symptoms without Medications/Massage", American Academy of Pediatrics, 3/27/2014, <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/Pages/How-to-Help-Teething-Symptoms-without-Medications.aspx>
6. Le Leche League, "Can I Keep breastfeeding Once My Baby Begins Teething?" The Womanly Art of breastfeeding, 8th Edition, Le Leche League International, 110 Horizon Dr., Suite 210, Raleigh, NC 27615, <https://www.llli.org/breastfeeding-info/teething/>, accessed 12/1/21
7. Swanson, MD, MBE, FAAP, Wendy Sue, "How to Help Teething Symptoms without Medications", American Academy of Pediatrics, 3/27/2014, <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/Pages/How-to-Help-Teething-Symptoms-without-Medications.aspx>, accessed 12/1/21
8. American Academy of Pediatrics, "Baby Teething Pain," 12/20/2018, <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/Pages/Teething-Pain.aspx>, accessed 12/1/21
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10. Swanson, MD, MBE, FAAP, Wendy Sue, "How to Help Teething Symptoms without Medications", American Academy of Pediatrics, 3/27/2014, <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/Pages/How-to-Help-Teething-Symptoms-without-Medications.aspx>
11. American Dental Association, "Teething", Mouth Healthy, <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/t/teething>, accessed 12/1/21
12. American Academy of Pediatrics, "Baby Teething Pain," 12/20/2018, <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/Pages/Teething-Pain.aspx>, accessed 12/1/21