

Teething

Teething occurs when teeth begin to break through the gums of a baby or child. This often starts when a baby is 6 to 8 months old, but can begin as early as 3 months.

Signs of Teething

- Drooling
- Swollen or sore gums
- Trouble sleeping
- Not eating
- Biting objects

Teething can be painful for some children. For others it is not. Discomfort comes from pressure of the tooth on the skin of the gums.

Your Child's Care

Here are some ways to comfort your baby and ease his or her pain:

- Gently rub the gums with a cool, damp washcloth.
- Give your baby something safe to chew on, such as rubber teething rings.
- Rub your baby's gums with a clean finger.
- Wipe your baby's face often and keep it dry to prevent rashes.
- Children's Tylenol or teething medicines can help, but check with your child's doctor first.

Keep your baby's mouth and gums clean even if your baby does not have teeth.

Here are some ways to care for your child's gums and teeth.

- After each meal, wipe your baby's gums with a washcloth.
- Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle of milk or juice. This can cause tooth decay.
- Use a soft bristle toothbrush to clean gums and new teeth.
- Clean your child's gums and teeth at least two times each day.

Talk to your child's doctor before you start using toothpaste on your child's teeth. Children should not swallow toothpaste. Too much fluoride can be harmful.

Call your child's doctor if your child:

- Has a fever or other illness. Teething does not cause an illness.
- Loses a tooth due to an injury.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.