

Teething

What's Normal?

Teething usually starts between 3 months and a year. Most babies get their first tooth at about 6 months. Once teething starts, it continues until your child is 2 to 3 years old. By age 3, they'll have 20 teeth. These will help them eat, speak and hold space for their permanent teeth, which will start to come in at about age 6.

How Will You Know?

Some babies aren't bothered by teething while others are uncomfortable, restless and fussy. Most will suck, drool and want to chew on their fingers or hard things.

You may also notice that your baby has red spots on their gums and cheeks that may feel warm to touch. Your baby may rub or pull on their ear and cheek and bring their hands to their mouth more often. Some babies sleep less soundly.

What You Can Do

Try to keep your baby's face clean and dry to prevent a rash. Begin brushing with a grain of rice sized amount of fluoride toothpaste when the first tooth appears. And help ease sore gums by:

- letting your baby chew on a clean teething ring or wet cloth that's been chilled in the fridge (not the freezer)
- wiping and massaging your baby's gums with a clean finger or cloth

Don't use:

- ✗ teething gels or ointments, which can numb your baby's throat so they are unable to gag and protect themselves from choking
- ✗ teething necklaces can be unsafe. If the beads break and your baby swallows them or if the necklace gets tangled, it could choke or hurt your baby
- ✗ liquid or gel-filled teething rings can be unsafe. Bacteria might grow inside them, and they can crack and break open
- ✗ teething biscuits, frozen fruit or other foods that can stick to your baby's teeth and cause decay
- ✗ avoid mesh teething bags as they may cause choking and can be difficult to clean, leading to bacterial growth



DID YOU KNOW?

Although teething may be uncomfortable for your baby, it doesn't cause fever. If they have a fever, treat it as you would normally (see [Baby Medical Care](#)).



DID YOU KNOW?

You can pass cavity-causing bacteria on to your baby. Take good care of your own teeth and don't put a soother or spoon in your mouth before giving it to your baby.

