

# Getting Through Your Baby's Teething Phase

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First 5 XX County

Is your baby irritable? Do you notice your baby sucking her fingers and drooling more? Maybe your baby is having trouble sleeping. Is she sick? Actually, she just might be teething.

While some babies get through teething without any symptoms or notice, it is normal for others to become fussy, irritable and even lose their appetites. First 5 XX County is here to provide important information to parents and caregivers to try to make this developmental stage easier.

## **Background**

Baby teeth start developing before birth. When babies are around 6 months old, it's common for teeth to break through their gums. It is also normal for some babies to have teeth emerge as early as four months or as late as their first birthday. By age 3, most children have their full set of 20 baby teeth.

## **Is My Baby Teething and What Should I Do?**

According to the American Dental Association, you should first inspect your baby's gums. If they're swollen and you can feel at least one tooth-size lump, teething is in progress. Once you're positive your baby's discomfort is due to teething, you should:

- Gently rub your baby's gums with a clean finger, a small, cool spoon or a wet gauze pad to soothe
- Provide your baby with a clean teething ring for him/her to chew (often, these can also be chilled in the refrigerator; coolness can help with any discomfort)
- Check if your dentist or pediatrician recommends a pacifier

## **Teething Myths**

Even though babies can be fussy while teething, it is important to remember not to rely on home remedies when trying to soothe their gums. For example, never rub whiskey

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## **First 5 XX County Teething Tips**

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or other alcoholic beverages on your baby's gums for comfort. Alcohol can be dangerous, and even poisonous to a baby. Other remedies such as rubbing olive oil on your baby's gums or giving your baby mint tea are neither proven to be effective nor endorsed by pediatricians.

### **Teething Truths**

Fortunately many babies only experience mild discomfort during teething. In most cases, babies will have a desire to chew on hard surfaces, such as toys and crib rails. It is also common for them to suck on their hands to ease irritated gums. These activities will result in more drooling than usual. Your baby may also develop a low-grade fever (less than 101° F) while teething, resulting from gum inflammation.

It is important to remember that other symptoms, such as diarrhea or a runny nose are not associated with teething. Consult your pediatrician whenever you believe your child is not feeling well.

First 5 XX County is committed to improving the lives of young children and their families. For more information about First 5 XX County programs, please call (XXX) XXX-XXXX or visit [www.XXX.org](http://www.XXX.org). For additional teething tips, please visit the American Dental Association Web site at [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org).

*Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life. Based on this research, California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998, adding a 50 cents-per-pack tax on cigarettes to support programs for expectant parents and children ages 0 to 5. First 5 XX County distributes approximately \$XX a year in Prop. 10 revenues to programs and services that meet local needs.*

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