

## Teething

### What is teething?

Teeth form under the gums. When the teeth start to break through the gums, it is called teething or cutting a tooth. An infant's first tooth normally comes at about 6 months of age. Between 6 and 24 months, most of the baby teeth come in. These are called primary teeth.

### What are the symptoms?

- Drooling.
- Gum discomfort or pain.
- Chewing things.
- Fussy or crabby.
- Loose stools (poop)
- Low-grade fever.



### What can I do for my child?

Some things you can try to help your child feel better:

- Rub their gums with a clean finger.
- Give your child something cold to chew on. A wet washcloth that has been chilled in the refrigerator works well. Do not give your child ice or popsicles, as they can be too cold.
- Give your child a hard object to chew on such as a teething ring or teething biscuit. Do not give your child hard foods that could cause choking such as raw carrots.
- If needed, give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4 to 6 hours or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) every 6 to 8 hours for pain. **Do not give motrin if your child is under 6 months old.** Teething gels can help numb the gums but the effect doesn't last long. Gels should not be used more than 4 times a day.



### What else do I need to know?

- If your child has loose stools use an ointment such as Vaseline on the skin after diaper changes. This will help prevent diaper rash.
- When infants have gum pain when teething, they may not want to bottle feed. If this happens, try to give formula or milk from a cup. Your child also may not feel like eating solid foods while the new teeth are coming in.

**ALERT:** Call your child's doctor, nurse or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child:

- Is crying for longer than normal and will not stop.
- Has no energy, is not interested in eating or drinking or is crabby.
- Has a temperature over 101.5 F (38.5C).
- Has special health care needs that were not covered in this teaching sheet.

**This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.**