

Pointers For Parents

Teething Tips

(NAPSA)—For many babies, teething can be a painful experience. Finding safe and effective ways to ease a baby's discomfort can challenge new parents, but there are many natural solutions that can help.

Teething usually begins when a baby's primary teeth come through the gums, somewhere between the ages of 3 to 12 months old. By age three, most children have all 20 of their first teeth.

Lauren Feder, M.D. is a nationally recognized physician and author who specializes in primary care medicine, pediatrics and homeopathy. She says, "All babies experience teething differently. Some experience a lot of discomfort, while others may show no symptoms. And while a baby might experience one episode of teething with pain, a subsequent tooth may cause little to no pain."

The tell-tale signs of teething include irritability, drooling, chin rash, biting and gnawing, diarrhea, low-grade fever, and wakefulness at night about 3 to 5 days before a tooth breaks through the gum. Because a baby cannot communicate his or her needs, parents may want to try a variety of solutions to relieve the discomfort of these symptoms, starting with the most gentle and natural.

"Cold washcloths, teething rings and massage can help soothe swollen, irritated gums," notes Dr. Feder. "Hard frozen foods and vegetables can present a choking hazard, however, so it's best to provide safe objects to chew on."

While many parents have used over-the-counter numbing benzocaine-based gels and liquids to ease teething pain, the FDA has advised that they can lead to a rare but serious condition called methemoglobinemia.



Teething babies can get relief from safe, natural products.

Symptoms of methemoglobinemia may be difficult for parents to interpret because they can be attributed to other illnesses. Concerned parents should ask their doctor before using benzocaine teething gels on a child, particularly under the age of 2. A consumer update from the FDA on this topic can be found at www.fda.gov.

"Natural medicines such as homeopathic teething tablets and gels can provide effective relief from mouth and gum pain," says Dr. Feder. "They are formulated to temporarily relieve the symptoms of simple restlessness and wakeful irritability and to help reduce redness and inflammation of gums," she adds.

Hyland's all-natural Baby Teething Tablets melt instantly upon contact and have been trusted by parents for over 85 years to ease teething discomfort without numbing a baby's gums.

(These statements are based upon traditional homeopathic practice. They have not been reviewed by the Food and Drug Administration.)

For more natural medicine suggestions and valuable offers, visit www.hylandsbaby.com. Hyland's products are available nationally in natural food stores, groceries, supercenters and pharmacies such as Walgreens.