



ALL ABOUT BABY TEETH

Q. When do babies get teeth?

A. On average, plus or minus two months (note overlap - several can come in at once!):

Front teeth (2)	Lower, 6-10 months	Upper, 8-12 months
Front side teeth (2)	Lower, 10-16 months	Upper, 9-13 months
Pointy side teeth (cuspids)(2)	Lower, 17-23 months	Upper, 16-22 months
First molars (2)	Lower, 14-18 months	Upper, 13-19 months
Second molars (2)	Lower, 23-31 months	Upper, 25-33 months

(from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry)

 The 'rule of fours' is how teeth usually appear. Beginning around six months,  expect four new teeth every four months. -- askdrsears.com

Symptom of teething	What to do
drooling	bibs; frequent rinses of chin & neck to avoid rash
chewing/gnawing	cold unbreakable teething ring, frozen wet washcloth, massage gums with your finger/thumb
fussing at breast/bottle/pacifier;demanding to nurse, then refusing to nurse	patience! sucking hurts, and the baby gets frustrated. don't take it personally.
frequent night waking	patience! give acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin) before bed (see below for dosages). cut back on your own activities for 2 weeks - you'll be sleepy during the day.
generalized daytime fussing and irritability	various teething remedies on the market, like ~ numbing gels (benzocaine anesthetic; don't use before feedings, as it can interfere with proper swallowing) ~ homeopathic drops or gels (chamomilla, etc) ~ clove oil (4 drops essential oil + 1 tablespoon olive oil) rubbed on gums (try it on your own gum first) ~ pure vanilla extract (contains alcohol) rubbed on gums ~ amber bead necklace and other "teething parent bling" (to be worn by caregiver holding baby, not worn by baby)
diaper rash, loose stool, runny nose, pulling on ears, low-grade fever (less than 101°) - caused by generalized inflammation.	treat symptoms as usual (diaper cream, acetaminophen/ ibuprofen, lots of nursing/fluids, comfort measures and distraction).
symptoms that are <u>not</u> normally caused by teething: ~ lethargy ~ no urine for 6 hours ~ cough, trouble breathing ~ fever 101° or more ~ vomiting repeatedly ~ all-over skin rash	sickness that gets worse and worse is not from teething. call your doctor. if you can't reach your doctor and you are concerned, go to the urgent care or emergency room.

Child's weight (in pounds)	Acetaminophen drops, 100 mg/mL	Acetaminophen syrup, 160 mg/ tsp	Baby ibuprofen 40 mg / mL	Kids' ibuprofen 100 mg / tsp
11	0.8 mL every 4 hours	1/2 tsp every 4 hours	1.25 mL every 6 hours	1/2 tsp every 6 hours
17	1.2 mL every 4 hours	3/4 tsp every 4 hours	1.88 mL every 6 hours	3/4 tsp every 6 hours
22	1.6 mL every 4 hours	1 tsp every 4 hours	2.5 mL every 6 hours	1 tsp every 6 hours
28	--	1+1/4 tsp every 4 hours	--	1+1/4 tsp every 6 hours
33	--	1+1/2 tsp every 4 hours	--	1+1/2 tsp every 6 hours
40	--	1+3/4 tsp every 4 hours	--	1+3/4 tsp every 6 hours

In between weights? Estimate! Use measuring device included with medicine.

Exactly what causes cavities?

Sugar and starch in the mouth are broken down by normal mouth bacteria. As a by-product, acid is produced. Acid eats away at the tooth surface, causing holes we call cavities.

Brushing the teeth scrubs away the sugar and starch, and toothpaste neutralizes the acid. The gentle massage also strengthens the gums.

How to protect baby teeth:

- No bottles or cups in bed or while sleeping. Note: sleep-nursing doesn't harm the teeth, because the milk doesn't pool against the teeth - not true for mother's milk in bottles. When the baby falls asleep, put the bottle away.
- Do not give juice or tea in bottles - if the baby is old enough for juice, they're old enough for a sippy cup.
- Don't establish sugar cravings: Do not give pacifiers dipped in sweet stuff, lollipops, popsicles, teething biscuits, biscotti, or other sweet/starchy chews. Stick to basic fresh foods at regularly-scheduled mealtimes.
- Let your older baby watch you brushing your own teeth, while holding his/her own baby-sized toothbrush. Finish up by helping them gently scrub their baby teeth. Don't let them walk around holding the toothbrush (fall risk)!

About fluoride:

Fluoride is a naturally-occurring substance in the environment, found in food and water, just like calcium or iron. It makes the tooth surface tougher. Most communities have extra fluoride added to the water supply to reduce cavities by 20-40%. See <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/MWF/> to find out if your community does.

Too much fluoride at a very young age can discolor the teeth, so the American Dental Association gives this advice:

- Breastfeed. If artificially feeding, mix powder formula with fluoride-free water, or use ready-to-feed baby milk.
- At 1 year, a child can drink fluoridated tap or nursery water.
- At 2 years, a child can use small amounts of fluoride toothpaste (the size of a dried split pea).
- At 6 years, a child can use fluoride mouthwash.

Thumb sucking:

- ...is **normal**. It's how babies and children comfort themselves. Ignore it.
- It is theoretically possible for thumb-sucking to alter tooth alignment, but this is unlikely - **unless** the problem becomes a power struggle between parent and child, causing insecurity and shame that encourages the child to cling to this comfort more frequently (especially when the parent isn't looking).
- Ignore the thumb-sucking, and provide a rich social life, with kids of all ages, for your child. The natural tendency of kids to imitate one another will naturally discourage thumb-sucking past about age 4-6.

Permanent "adult" teeth:

- Adults usually have a total of 32 permanent teeth. Rarely, a person will have fewer or more.
- Permanent teeth start coming in around age 6 or 7, loosening and then pushing the baby teeth out.
- 28 of the permanent teeth are usually in place around age 13.
- The last four "wisdom teeth" usually appear around age 17-24.
- It is not necessary to remove wisdom teeth that are not causing symptoms (pain, infection). Just keep them clean. They should be brushed and flossed like all other teeth. If surgery is advised, get additional opinions.

Dentistry on baby teeth?

Yes! Even baby teeth may need fillings, crowns, and root canals. This is because they are needed to hold the space for adult teeth to come in nice and straight. Tooth abscesses, caused by very bad cavities, can cause serious illness, even requiring hospitalization, for a child. Prevent these problems with frequent inspection, careful brushing, careful use of fluoride, no sweets except as very occasional treats, and a visit to the dentist whenever you suspect anything abnormal.

Tooth injury?

Kids aged 2-4 are at highest risk for having tooth injuries, often from hitting their mouth on a table surface or the floor.

Broken/ chipped tooth: Call your dentist to get sharp edges smoothed down or filled in. Give acetaminophen/ibuprofen until your appointment.

Loosened/crooked tooth due to injury: Occurs because the jawbone holding the teeth is still somewhat soft and flexible to allow growth. Leave the tooth alone and let it set back into place naturally.

Tooth jammed back up into the gum: Leave it alone. It will come down again, just like when it first came in. Notify your dentist, who might ask for an x-ray (to make sure it hasn't crashed into the permanent tooth bud).

Tooth knocked out: Very unusual! If the tooth was not previously ready to come out, you might need a spacer to hold the space open for the adult tooth to come in. Consult your dentist.

Tooth turning dark, after a previous tooth injury: This means the tooth has lost circulation. Don't tell your child the tooth is "dead," as this may freak them out. If the tooth becomes painful or infected (with pus, swelling, redness, fever), call your dentist - it will probably need to be removed.

Split lip/ bitten tongue: Bleeding that doesn't stop with 10 minutes of ice and pressure, or a gaping cut across the border of the lip, where it meets the skin, needs stitches. Infection or trouble feeding - contact your doctor.