



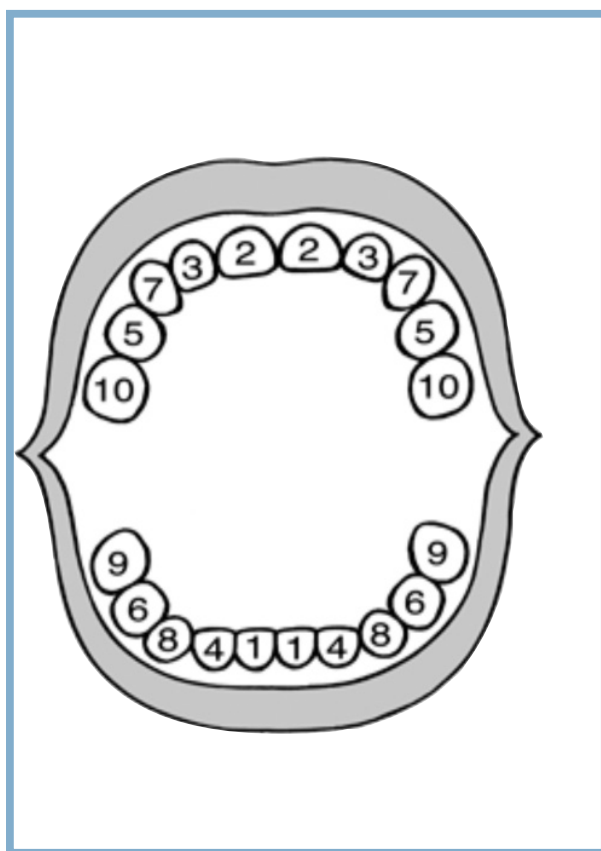
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# Tips for Teething

Most babies get their first teeth by the age of six months; however some can teethe much earlier or later.

1,2,3,4	Incisors	6-12 months
5,6	Baby first molars	12-20+ months
7,8	Canines	18-24 months
9,10	Baby second molars	24-30 months

NB\* A large range is normal and each child has his or her own timetable for eruption



The arrival of teeth is a natural process for all babies. The times when teeth appear vary from baby to baby but generally occurs around 6-7 months of age. Each baby tooth emerges ('erupts') slowly over several weeks or months. They usually come through in pairs starting with the bottom front followed by the top two middle and then along the sides and back. By the age of 3 your child should have a full set of 20 baby teeth.

You may see a lump or an elevation of the gum for several weeks prior to eruption, while sometimes there are no visible signs until the tooth actually appears. For some babies the arrival of teeth happens without any pain,

whilst for other babies teething may cause discomfort. It is important to establish that teething is the problem before administering any treatments.

## Signs of Teething

- swollen gums, cheeks can appear red and slightly fuller;
- increased saliva, which can cause drooling. Drooling may cause a rash to develop on the chin, face or chest;
- biting on fingers or toys to try to relieve the gum discomfort;
- refusing to eat and drink because of mouth soreness;
- ear rubbing on the same side as the erupting tooth;
- irritability and difficulty sleeping
- low grade fever – any fever of 37.5°C in a baby under three months or 38°C in a baby over three months requires a medical review

Symptoms usually begin about 3 to 5 days before a tooth erupts, and they disappear as soon as the tooth breaks through the gum.

## Management of Teething discomfort

- Cuddle Therapy: A little extra tender loving care goes a long way when your baby is having a hard time teething. Hugs and cuddles will help comfort and reassure your baby if he or she is distressed.

- **Rubbing Their Gums:** Lightly massaging your baby's gum with a clean finger for one to two minutes can be soothing and help alleviate some of their discomfort.
- **Teething Rings:** Teething babies love to chew and bite - on anything! Many mums find that clean chilled teething rings can be useful.
- **Food for Chewing:** If your baby is over six months old, try offering them a sugar-free teething biscuit or unsweetened rusk. Alternatively, some like to gnaw on chilled bread slices or carrot sticks. Whatever you choose to give your baby make sure they are supervised and that they cannot bite chunks off, which could cause your baby to choke. It is also preferable to avoid foods that are too hard as these could bruise the gums and cause further pain.
- **Teething Gels:** Teething gels massaged into the gums with a clean finger can provide relief. Look for ones that are sugar-free, colour-free and alcohol free and make sure you check the dosage instructions and expiry date very carefully. (Always read the label). If unsure consult your doctor.
- **Soothing Sore Chins:** Excessive dribbling caused by teething can irritate babies' chin, neck and chest which may become dry, chapped and sore. Try to keep their skin as dry as possible (a bib will help) and change any wet clothing. Applying a simple barrier cream can also help keep their skin soft and smooth and may ease any chapped skin.

## Caring for your Baby's Teeth

- As soon as your baby's teeth start to appear, start cleaning them twice a day with a soft cloth or gauze pad. As more teeth erupt, clean teeth with a soft toothbrush, using only water for the first 18 months – **WITHOUT TOOTHPASTE.**
- Clean teeth using a soft circular motion
- From 18 months to 5 years – use a pea-sized smear of **LOW FLUORIDE TOOTHPASTE**
- From 6 years and older – use a pea-sized smear of **STANDARD FLUORIDE TOOTHPASTE**
- If you are bottle feeding prevent decay by always taking the bottle out of your baby's mouth as soon as he or she is finished and don't prop feed to prevent milk pooling in the mouth
- When your baby starts eating solids, offer healthy foods that are low in sugar, and keep milk feeding during the night to a minimum
- Assist your child with brushing at least once a day until he or she is 8 or 9 years old.

Note: Some parents feel their babies develop a fever or get diarrhoea when a tooth is about to come through. Most health experts agree that teething does not cause illness. It is more likely that your baby is coming down with a cold or tummy troubles, so if you are worried it is best to have your baby checked by your local doctor.

# Book a visit to Tresillian:

Visit [tresillian.org.au](https://tresillian.org.au),  
fill in the short online contact  
form and one of our Nurses  
will call you back.



Ask your local Health  
Professional, Child & Family  
Health Nurse, GP or early  
parenting support service  
to refer you and your child.



## Tresillian Parent's Help Line

NSW/ACT FREECALL 1300 272 736

Tasmania FREECALL 1300 827 282



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Co-developed with  
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## Acknowledgement of Country

Tresillian acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as the First Peoples of Australia, the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land in the countries on which we live and work in NSW, the ACT and TAS. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the communities we serve.



**Tresillian**<sup>®</sup>

*It's in our nature to nurture*