

WHAT ARE THE BEST WAYS TO DEAL WITH TEETHING?

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Abstract: *Teething is a process when the first tooth is clinically visible as it cuts through the infant gingiva. It coincides at a time range when maternal antibodies decrease, making the child vulnerable to a host of diseases. This has led to multiple symptoms be associated with teething. Dealing with teething can be challenging for the parent unless they can be guided by dental practitioners and more specifically, pediatric dentists.*

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Sir,

Teething usually starts between four to seven months of age. The two front teeth (central incisor) either upper or lower, usually appear first, followed by the opposite front teeth. The symptoms that are associated with teething are general irritability, disturbed sleep, diarrhoea, circumoral rash, intraoral ulcer, fever, gum inflammation, loss of appetite, gum rubbing, wakefulness and ear rubbing. These symptoms are disappeared on either the day of, or the day after the eruption.

The best way of to deal with teething is by avoiding any medication. One of the most common modalities to provide relief from teething pain is done through teething toys and wash cloth chilled in the freezer for 15 to 30 minutes. Variety of fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables for infants can also add to elimination of some of these symptoms. Pacifiers are also used for countering pain associated with teething. Bananas are one of the best and easiest way to soothe aching gums.^{1 2}

The Canadian Dental Association (CDA) does not recommend using other teething remedies such as gels that are applied on the baby's gums. The risk of aspiration is the primary reason

behind not advocating this treatment modality.¹ The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends alternative ways for treating teething pain including rubbing infant's gums with a clean finger or providing a teething ring made of firm rubber to chew on.²

The process of teething is experienced by every child. It is a matter of concern for many parents considering the irritable mood and a constant nagging pain that their child feels. Even though pharmacological means exist, non-pharmacological means must be preferred for the relief of teething associated discomfort and pain.

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