

## Oral Health

Teeth can start to emerge from four months old to over one year old, and whenever this is, it's fine. Teething is usually noticed by red hard gums, flushed red spots on one or both cheeks, lots of dribbling, chewing and gnawing on objects. Sometimes babies can pull up their ears as well, getting upset more easily than usual, and clinging to you as the caregiver. There are over-the-counter treatments for teething such as gels, rubs, and powders. Cool teething rings can be good to chew on. Babies tend to find anything hard to bite on to aid this process.

As teeth emerge, you should brush your children's teeth twice a day, morning and evening, after their last milk drink. You should use a soft baby toothbrush with small head and soft bristles, using baby's toothpaste with at least 1,000 parts per million of fluoride. You should only use a thin smear of toothpaste or it foams too much. Spit, don't rinse. We advise registering your child at the dentist from one-year-old. Aim to move your child onto beakers and cups by one-year-old and ditch your bottle. Start with drinks in the daytime, then try offering the morning feed in a beaker rather than a bottle. Moving towards the night time bottle probably being the last one to go.