Teething

Teething is the natural process of teeth working their way through the jaw bone and cutting through the gums.

Signs of Teething:
- Change in appetite and sleep patterns
- Urge to chew and bite
- Irritability
- Excessive drooling

Usual time for primary teeth to appear
- Each child is different and may not follow the exact time chart
- The first tooth normally comes in between 6 and 10 months
- By age 2½ to 3 years, children usually have 20 baby teeth
- At about 6 years of age a child starts to get their permanent (adult) teeth. The 1st adult molar grows in behind the baby teeth

What you can do to care for your teething child.
- Massage the irritated or swollen gums with a clean finger.
- Use a wet cloth chilled in the refrigerator to massage the gums.
- Offer a safe teething ring that has been chilled (not frozen).
- **Do not use** over-the-counter baby gum numbing gels. They contain a strong anaesthetic that is difficult to control, which may numb the entire mouth and the baby’s throat. This will suppress the gag reflex, interfering with baby’s swallowing and may result in choking.
- **Do not give** teething biscuits, they are high in sugar and can cause cavities, especially in new baby teeth. The biscuits also get soft and mushy and may become a choking hazard for the baby.

**Caution:** If your child has a fever, runny nose or diarrhea, these are **not** typical signs of teething. **Call your doctor.**

For more information talk to your dentist or dental hygienist or call Ottawa Public Health at 613-580-6744.

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