

Happy Smiles Club



John G Plummer & Associates Dental Surgeons

Infant Oral Health Care

Baby teeth start to break through the gums around 6 months, but it is important to start good oral care for infants even before the first tooth comes in. From healthy gums come healthy teeth!



Teething

Teething is the process by which an infant's teeth erupt, or break through the gums. Most babies usually get their first teeth between 6-10 months and although every child is different - most children have a full set of 20 baby teeth by the time they are 3 years old.

Some **signs of teething** to look out for; dribbling, irritable, chewing on hands or hard objects, sore and red gums, flushed cheeks.

Our top tips to help sooth your baby's gums;

- Teething rings - chewing on teething rings can ease the pain
- Sugar free teething gels
- Chewing healthy snacks such as raw fruit and vegetables
- Medication (containing Paracetamol/Ibuprofen) - should be sugar free and specific to age group
- Cool drinks
- Comforting or playing with baby to distract them from the pain

When should I start brushing my infant's teeth?

As **soon as the first tooth erupts**, brush twice a day with no less than **1000ppm fluoride**

toothpaste the size of a grain of rice shown in the picture.



To check you are using the correct amount of fluoride, on the ingredients list on the back of the toothpaste tube, it will say in brackets the amount of fluoride it contains for example (1000 ppm F).

From 6 months of age babies should be introduced to drinking from a free-flow cup, and from age of one feeding from a bottle should be discouraged. For example, the Munchkin Miracle 360-degree training cup.



Research shows that prolonged use of a bottle can result in bottle tooth decay and this can happen when babies drink from bottles over long periods of time or fall asleep with the bottle.

What else can I do to help?

Dummies should be discouraged by the age of one as this can affect their speech, facial muscles and teeth. They should **never** be dipped in sweet substances such as honey.

Sugar free medicine is always recommended where possible.

Never add sugars to food when weaning.

Schedule your child's first dental appointment before their first birthday or after that first baby tooth erupts - whichever comes first.