What you really need to know about teething and your baby’s teeth.

Helpful hints from Sma Nutrition

British Dental Health Foundation
Help from people with experience

Your baby's first tooth coming through is an exciting time.

Just like those first steps and first words, it's another
important stage in your baby's growing up.

Naturally you'll want to make sure your baby's teeth remain
strong and healthy as he grows. Your dentist and other
healthcare professionals can help advise you on how to look
after your baby's teeth. Whilst not intended to replace their advice,
this booklet can also be a handy guide. Covering everything from
the first signs of teething to reminders on good feeding practice and
dental care, it's been prepared by people with experience of taking
care of babies, so it is full of realistic and practical information.

In an effort to constantly improve the quality of the booklets and
information we offer mums and dads, your feedback is greatly
appreciated. If you have any tips you think other parents would find
useful, or comments on how we could improve this booklet, you can
write to us, ring the SMA Careline* or visit our website at
www.smanutrition.co.uk

To all those who have already done so, and whose comments we've tried
to incorporate in this booklet, we'd like to say thank you.
Q. When do babies start teething?

A. All babies are different. Most have one or two teeth by the time they reach 6 months, however it's quite normal if your baby's teeth appear before or after this time. A few babies are born with a tooth and some still don't have any teeth when they reach their first birthday. Teething is known to follow a hereditary pattern, so if you or your partner started teething late, your baby may do the same.

Q. In what order do the teeth come in?

A. Your baby's first teeth are known as milk teeth or primary teeth. There are 20 milk teeth in all; 10 at the top and 10 at the bottom. By 2½ to 3 years of age, all twenty of your baby's milk teeth will have appeared. These teeth are important because they help to prepare the way for a set of healthy, straight, adult teeth.
How the teeth come in.

Teeth normally appear in the numerical order shown in this diagram:

**UPPER JAW**

Upper front teeth usually follow the lower fronts.

Upper side teeth come in next

**LOWER JAW**

Lower fronts are normally the first teeth to arrive.

These are followed by lower side teeth.
Q. How will I know that my baby is teething?

A. Your baby may show some or all of the following signs of teething:

- Dribbling more than usual • Flushed cheeks
- Red, sore gums • Difficulty in sleeping • Restlessness
- Chewing or biting on hard surfaces • Slight fever

Teething is often blamed for a number of baby complaints ranging from colds to rashes. However, teething shouldn't make your baby ill. So, if you are concerned, check with your doctor, health visitor or public health nurse.
Q. How can I help ease my baby’s teething discomfort?

A. Any of the following may help:

- Rub his gums with a clean finger
- Give extra cuddles to help comfort him
- Give a chilled (not frozen) teething ring
- Try a sugar-free teething gel to rub on the gums (only babies over 4 months)
- Sugar-free paracetamol may help if he has a fever (suitable for baby’s age)

If weaned (over 6 months)

- Try giving a chilled slice of carrot
- Give him a breadstick to chew on (not sesame)

Do not leave your baby alone because of the risk of choking.