



**Pennine Care**  
NHS Foundation Trust



# LOOKING AFTER YOUR BABY'S TEETH

Advice for parents

**Congratulations on your new baby. It is an exciting time for all the family with lots of new responsibilities to think about. Looking after your baby's teeth is just one of them and it's never too early to start thinking about establishing a good oral health routine. These top tips can get your child off to the best start and achieve a healthy smile that will last a lifetime. We have provided you with a baby toothbrush and a tube of family fluoride toothpaste to use as soon as their first tooth appears.**

**Breastfeeding:** Breastfeeding has lots of benefits for both mum and baby. It's free, available when needed, contains all the nutrients baby needs to fight off infections, provides long term health benefits for mum and it also promotes good oral health. Speak to your midwife/health visitor for support with breastfeeding or visit [www.nhs.uk/start4life](http://www.nhs.uk/start4life)

**Bottle-feeding:** If you choose to bottle feed only breast / formula milk or cooled, boiled water should be given. Don't add any types of juice. From the age of six months, introduce drinking from an open or free-flow feeder cup. Bottle feeding should be discouraged from 12 months old.

**Teething:** When it comes to teething, all babies are different, but most usually get their first tooth around 6 months. For some babies, teething is straightforward but for others it can be uncomfortable and they can be more fretful.

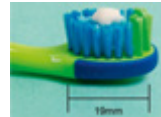
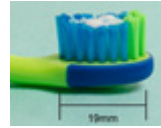
You may notice that:

- your baby's gum is sore and red where the tooth is coming through
- one cheek is flushed
- they are rubbing their ear
- they are dribbling more than usual
- they are gnawing or chewing on things more often

Try offering them a cooled, teething ring to chew on. If they are in pain sugar free paracetamol or ibuprofen can be given to relieve teething symptoms in babies and young children aged 3 months or older.

## Brushing your baby's teeth:

- Brushing should start as soon as the first tooth appears
- Brush teeth for two minutes at least twice a day: always just before bed and at one other time to suit your daily routine
- Use a toothpaste that contains no less than 1,000ppmF (parts per million) fluoride. Family fluoride toothpastes containing 1,350-1,500ppmF, which has been provided, will give maximum protection for teeth against tooth decay
- Babies and children under 3 years should use no more than a smear of toothpaste
- Children aged 3-6 years should use a pea sized amount
- Children should be supervised by an adult until they are at least 7 years old. It is not advisable for them to eat or lick toothpaste from the tube
- It can sometimes be a struggle getting babies and young children into a brushing routine. Let them watch you or older siblings, make it fun
- Encourage your child to spit out after brushing and do not rinse. Leaving fluoride in the mouth helps protect teeth from tooth decay



**Visiting a dentist:** It is important that both you and your baby have a dental check-up before their first birthday. If you need to find a local NHS dentist call **NHS 111** or visit **[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)**

**GM Urgent Dental Care:** If you do not have a regular dentist and have a dental emergency call: **0333 332 3800**  
8.00am – 10.00pm 7 days per week or visit **[www.gtdhealthcare.co.uk/patient-services/dental](http://www.gtdhealthcare.co.uk/patient-services/dental)**



If you would like to make some small changes to your lifestyle that can make a big difference to your general health and well-being contact Be Well Tameside. The service provides free, one to one, health and well-being support around stopping smoking, eating healthier or getting more physically active. For more advice or to make any appointment contact:

**0161 716 2000** or email: [bewelltameside@nhs.net](mailto:bewelltameside@nhs.net)

Visit the website [www.penninecare.nhs.uk/bewelltameside](http://www.penninecare.nhs.uk/bewelltameside)

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