

Teething tips from dental specialists

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(HealthDay)—You've fed your baby, changed your baby, but the baby is still cranky. It's possible he or she is uncomfortable because tiny teeth are trying to push through the gums. What can you do to ease the pain?

One approach is to offer a plain, solid teething ring, which lets the baby apply pressure to ease the pain. While chilling the teething ring may provide added relief, don't freeze it because the extreme cold can be harmful rather than soothing, dental experts say.

"Your child's gums can be sensitive during this time, and your child will know how much pressure they should apply to try and relieve the pain. They're their best teacher and, in this instance, know what they need," said Dr. William Wathen, associate professor at Texas A&M University's College of Dentistry.

Massaging a baby's gums with a clean finger or a cooled washcloth is also soothing. If you've started introducing solid food to your baby, cold applesauce or yogurt could offer some relief, Wathen noted.

"It's important to respond to your baby when it comes to coping with the pain," he said in a university news release. "Your baby may want more pressure or less [pressure](#), so it'll take a lot of experimenting to see what works and which areas of the gums are most sensitive."

Some parents give their [babies pain](#) relievers, but Wathen recommends against that.

"Just remember that teething is a normal event, and if baby has discomfort, it is mild and temporary," he said.

Some parents also use teething gels, but Wathen doesn't endorse these either.

"Many [teething](#) gels contain benzocaine. This ingredient can be harmful to babies if they swallow it, which is very likely if it's on their gums," he said.

More information: The American Academy of Pediatrics has more on [teething](#).

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