Help, My Baby is Teething!

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When your baby is about four months old, a lot of brain and physical development is taking place. You might find that your baby is a little fussier, there is a change in the content of your baby’s nappy and your baby’s feeding habits are changing. Very often teething is to blame for all these changes and the extra fussiness, but is it just teething? And can we reduce the teething problems for a happier, calmer baby?

Common myths about teething

- Teething causes fever
- Teething babies get diarrhoea
- Teething infants have diaper rash
- Teething babies pull on their ears
- Teething causes a stuffy nose

I must admit, I have two children and some of the above myths shocked me too, I believed they were sure signs of a teething baby.

But what causes the above symptoms that are so common amongst teething babies?

Between 4 and 9 months a baby’s eye-sight starts to improve, baby becomes more mobile and baby becomes more skilled in grasping objects, baby is in explore-mode! And because teething is painful (that is unfortunately not part of the myth – it is indeed very painful) babies put anything and everything in their mouths. These objects are often covered in germs. And do you know what germs do? They cause infection and infection causes fever. They cause diarrhea, they weaken the digestive tract that might cause diaper rash, they cause ear infection, and they cause infection in the nasal cavities.

So, what can I do to solve the germ and infection problem?

Keep your baby’s immediate area clean, wash baby’s toys with warm water and soap and also make sure that the outside area where your baby plays is clean. Babies need to be exposed to some germs in order for them to build an immune system, so make sure the area is clean but not sterile, it isn’t necessary to disinfect your entire house.

Regular massage improves your baby’s immune system. In BabyGym® 2: Firm Foundations we teach a very thorough full body massage that is specifically aimed at improving your baby’s immune system. The BabyGym massage over the colon also improves digestion, which will help to improve the problematic “teething-diapers”. Furthermore, the massage helps to clear a stuffy nose and drain excess mucus from the nasal cavities, which can improve breathing; proper breathing will improve feeding and hence also aid digestion.
Symptoms of teething

- Drooling
- Teething rash
- Coughing or gag reflex
- Biting
- Crying
- Irritability
- Refusal to feed
- Ear pulling
- Night waking

Teething babies drool, because there is swelling in their gums and they have painful mouths. The excessive saliva causes a rash around their mouths and coughing. The pain causes the other symptoms. To relieve the pain start by tracing the bottom and top jaw and proceed to massage the jaw joint, this reduces inflammation, eases pain and loosens the jaw-muscles. Then simulate contractions around the crown of baby’s head to activate the rooting and sucking reflex. Then you massage the inside of the mouth, including the tongue and gums; this reduces inflammation and ‘wakes-up’ the mouth.

If your baby refuses to feed, you can apply the BabyGym Week 3 massage to improve your baby’s feeding during the painful teething stage; the massage can even reduce the occurrence of biting during feeds. The first step of this massage is to place one hand on the belly-button and the other hand on baby’s chin, simultaneously massage the chin and belly button; by doing this we “remind” the brain that baby was once fed passively through the umbilical cord and that the mouth must now actively feed. The second part pf the feeding massage requires that one hand be placed on the upper lip and the other on the coccyx, now simultaneously massage the upper lip and coccyx. By doing this we “remind” the brain that what is ingested must be digested and excreted.

The teething phase isn’t a pleasant one for Baby, Mom or Dad- but with a few basic BabyGym exercises you are able to ease pain, boost the immune system, increase awareness of the mouth, aid feeding, and aid digestion so that your baby teethes as comfortable as possible.

http://www.whattoexpect.com/first-year/teething/
http://www.education.com/magazine/article/teething-troubles-myths/

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