



Bite

# Word of mouth

23 NOV 2013

Featured

## Medical myth: infant teething causes fevers

Any parent can tell you that infant teething makes for a trying time. Restless nights, feeding problems and irritability can all be part and parcel when an infant's baby teeth erupt through their gums. But does infant teething really cause a child to get a fever?

Baby teeth (also known as milk or deciduous teeth) begin to form very early in the pregnancy—about eight weeks after conception. By the time the baby is born, all 20 teeth are present in her jawbone. These teeth begin pushing up through the gum tissue when the child is around six months old. By age three, most children will have their full set of baby teeth.

Deciduous teeth allow the child to begin the process of digestion by grinding solid food up before it's swallowed. They also reserve the space for the child's adult teeth and if extracted early—due to dental decay, for instance—the resulting space loss can cause misalignment or crowding of permanent teeth.

Children's symptoms during teething vary greatly. Some won't react at all, but

most will develop swollen gums, red cheeks and will dribble excessively as well as being generally irritable.

Parents often blame a range of illnesses on teething. A study from the Royal Children's Hospital in Victoria found that 70% to 85% of Australian parents believed teething caused a wide variety of health problems including fevers. But several studies that followed children through the teething process found no measurable change in temperature on the day a tooth erupts or in the three days leading up to this.

The fever myth has a lot to do with the age that teething takes place. The six-months

to three-year age range is also associated with an increase in minor infections such as colds or bouts of the flu, which can cause



- 1 **Featured**  
Infant teething causes fevers
- 2 **Handy Hygiene Hints**  
Choosing the right bristles
- 2 **News**  
A new studio addition
- 2 **Education**  
Diabetes education nights

### This month...

*Do you have the belief that teething causes fever? Its a common thought though quite unfounded. If you know of any young teethers you'll want to read our feature article.*

*We have a new addition to the studio...and this time its not a staff member!*

*Jenna is back with handy advice on a bristling topic.*

*Lastly, our free Diabetes education program kicks off. Our information sessions include expert advice to help give back some control to sufferers. Book your place now.*

Dr Simon Franks



> continued

a fever. Fevers occur when the child's temperature rises above 38°C and can be the sign of an infection. If your child has a temperature of 39°C or above, this could indicate a serious infection so see your health professional immediately for advice.

So what's the best way for parents to deal with a teething child?

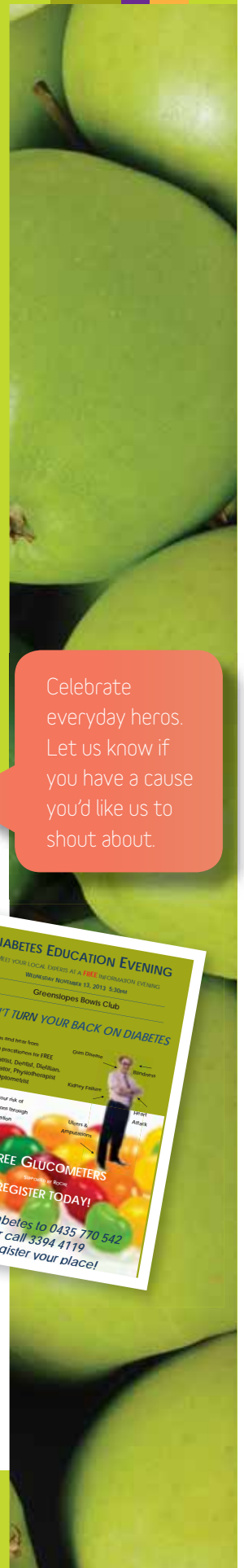
It's normal for the child to be a little uncomfortable and these minor symptoms usually subside within week. They may benefit from biting on something hard and smooth like a teething ring.

Teething gels, which contain topical anaesthetic, can be applied on the baby's gum to ease teething pain. But avoid using them before

feeding because they can numb the baby's tongue and can make sucking difficult.

It's worth keeping in mind that some of the baby teeth will stay in their mouth until around until the age of 12 years before naturally falling out (or exfoliating). So as soon a child's first tooth emerges, you can gently brush their teeth to protect them from decay. Use a clean, damp face washer or a soft toothbrush and low fluoride toothpaste each day.

The infant teething process might result in a few dark circles under the eyes of new parents but rest assured the adult teething process will involve fewer tears. Unless, of course, the tooth fairy fails to show!



Celebrate everyday heros. Let us know if you have a cause you'd like us to shout about.

### Healthy Hygiene Hints

#### Choosing the right bristles

Some toothbrushes have angled bristles, others straight. So what type is better? Dentists say neither... As I always say, it's more related to TECHNIQUE than bristle style.

So which bristles should you look for when buying a toothbrush? Bristles that are too stiff can aggravate the gums and sometimes remove some gum tissue (which doesn't grow back!). Bristles should be sturdy enough to remove plaque but not hard enough to damage the tissues when used properly. 'Natural' bristles such as those made from animal hair or boar bristle are not recommended.

The ADA recommends a SOFT-bristled brush.



Jenna



### News

#### New studio addition

At your next visit you'll notice a great, bright, green addition to Jenna's room! This new dental chair is very exciting for us and is the end of an era for the navy-blue ship that was docked in surgery 2 for more than 30 years! This will make your future visits as comfortable as can be. So long "Bluey"... welcome to the new era!

### Education

#### Diabetes education nights

This month, Simon and Jenna will be running a free education evening in Greenslopes for people diagnosed with diabetes. Diabetes is a condition that is very complex and affects the WHOLE body—even the teeth! Bite Dental, along with colleagues from a number of different allied health areas including podiatry, optometry, nutrition, exercise physiology, diabetes education and more will be donating their time once a quarter to help others understand how this condition affects different aspects of the body and what you can do about it.

If you, or someone you know has diabetes—ask Lyn-Maree for some more information on these evenings. They will be very valuable!

#### Do you have Diabetes?

Come to our **FREE** info session with local experts

Wednesday 13 November • Greenslopes Bowls Club

**REGISTER NOW: text DIABETES to 0435 770 542**

