



Dr Wolfgang Muller (Consultant Paediatrician)

Parent Information Guide:

Teething and Fever: What Parents Need to Know

What is teething?

Teething is when your baby's teeth start to break through the gums. It usually begins between 4 and 10 months of age and continues into toddlerhood. Common symptoms of teething include:

- Red or swollen gums
- Drooling
- Chewing on objects or hands
- Mild irritability or fussiness
- Disturbed sleep

Can teething cause a fever?

Many parents worry that teething causes fever — but here's what we know from medical research:

Teething may cause a slight rise in body temperature but not a true fever.

- A **low-grade temperature** (below 38.0 °C / 100.4 °F) can sometimes happen with teething.
- A temperature of **38.0 °C (100.4 °F) or higher is not caused by teething** and should not be ignored.



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When to seek medical advice

If your baby or toddler has any of the following, please seek medical attention:

- ✓ Fever of **38.0 °C (100.4 °F) or higher**
- ✓ Drowsiness or difficulty waking
- ✓ Poor feeding or refusal to drink
- ✓ Persistent crying or obvious pain
- ✓ Rash, vomiting, diarrhoea, or breathing difficulties

These signs could point to an illness such as a cold, ear infection, or another condition — not teething.

Enclosed is a link to further parent information:

Parent information on “My child is unwell – When should I see a doctor?”

<https://drwmuller.com/information-for-parents-carers/>

See: Emergencies: “When do I need to see a doctor urgently?”

How to soothe a teething baby

You can try the following safe options:

- Teething rings (cooled in the fridge, not the freezer)
 - Gentle gum massage with a clean finger
 - Age-appropriate teething gels (as advised by a pharmacist)
 - Infant paracetamol or ibuprofen **if your baby is distressed or in pain** (check age restrictions and dosages carefully)
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Summary

Symptom	Could be teething?	Seek advice?
Mild irritability	✓ Yes	✗ Not always
Slightly raised temp (<38°C)	✓ Yes	✗ Not usually
Fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$	✗ Unlikely	✓ Yes
Poor feeding, rash, etc.	✗ Not typical	✓ Yes

Questions?

If you're unsure whether your baby's symptoms are due to teething or something else, it's always best to check with your GP or health visitor.

Written by: Dr W Muller

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