

Transitioning from that gummy grin to a mouthful of gleaming teeth is a rite of passage that can take your little one three years to complete. Whenever the first tooth peeks through, celebrate it by taking pictures and noting its arrival date in your child's baby book.

Baby's First Tooth



Tooth buds for your baby's first teeth begin to form at about six weeks of fetal life. Between the fourth and fifth months of fetal life, some tooth buds become evident. By about the seventh month of fetal life, the tooth buds for all of your baby's primary [deciduous] teeth are formed. At birth, the crowns-the portions of the teeth visible above the gums-of your baby's front teeth are already formed and contain most of their enamel covering. The crowns for some of the other primary teeth are partially formed, and the tooth buds for some of the permanent molars are forming. By the time your child is three years old, the crowns of some permanent teeth will be clearly fairly well formed, and the tooth buds for the last molars will have formed.

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As early as three months of age, your baby may begin teething. Teething is marked by drooling, fretting, and chewing on things in an attempt to reduce the discomfort of sore, swollen gums. Some babies will exhibit these symptoms for up to four months before the first tooth finally erupts. If your baby seems uncomfortable, you can help reduce the pain and swelling in her gums by giving her firm, smooth, cool, unbreakable objects to chew. Massaging the inflamed gums with a clean fingertip may also be helpful. Medications to numb painful gums are also available.

BABY GIFTS & GIFT BASKETS

While you were pregnant, your baby developed tooth buds, the foundation for baby teeth (also called milk teeth). Only one in 2,000 babies is born with teeth, though. The vast majority sprout their first tooth between 4 and 7 months of age.

[Baby Gifts and Gift Baskets](#) provides timely and practical information for new moms, as well as gift ideas for pregnancy, baby showers, and to celebrate birth:

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