Podcast Intro and Season Overview

Hi, you're listening to season four of the Baby Manual Podcast, the podcast that helps new parents all over the world navigate the everyday challenges that arise when you have a young baby.

This season will help you decide which pregnancy, baby, and toddler items you actually need and which ones are a waste of time and money. I'm pulling on the knowledge of hundreds of thousands of new parents around the world, other pediatricians, doctor moms, the Academy of Pediatrics, breaking pediatric news sites, all to give you the best information and recommendations that I can, because I know how overwhelming it can be.

I am your host, a pediatrician, mom, and author, Dr. Carol Keim. Hello, welcome back. Today we are going to talk all about teething and feeding things that you should have for your baby.

So teathing typically happens around six months of age, but can happen anytime in the first year and a half of life. And it can be normal for you child to get their first tooth anywhere from zero to 18 months age.

You might want to have some of these teating things on hand even before your babies born in case they are born with a tooth or in cases they get one very early on.

So I had mentioned in our last episode about medications to have on hand, either some acetaminophen or paracetamol outside the US, or some topical teething ointment like orogel or anbasol, which is just a local anesthetic.

Those can be really helpful to for your baby if they're having a lot of pain from the teathing.

Teething Basics and Pain Relief

So if their really fussy and they are not sleeping well and their not eating well, and you can feel little bumps on their gums where the teeth are trying to break through, then those could be reasons to try some teething medication.

As soon as your baby has a tooth, you're going to need to brush that tooth. So any toothbrush with soft bristles is good, and you can get a child-sized toothbrush.

I usually recommend those ones for babies. And just start off brushing with water every day, twice a day if you especially for those babies that have really early teeth, they're a lot more likely to get cavities.

So you do want to brush those teeth as soon as they come out with a toothbrush with soft bristles and water. After they are a year old, you can use toothpaste that has fluoride in it, but you're only going to use the tiniest amount that you could see, like just touch the toothpaste to the brush and pull it away again.

The equivalent of like a grain of rice. at a time is all that they should have. And the fluoride will help the enamel on their teeth and it'll help prevent cavities.

If it's just a grain of rice amount, it is safe for them to swallow that amount and can even help for the teeth that are still coming in to get that fluorine into the anamel in those teeth, and to help to prevent future cavity even in their adult teeth.

So after a year of age, some fluoride toothpaste is good. You'll want one that is for children so that it's not like a spicy mint one, that the adults use.

Teething toys are great, I have some favorites. I really love that banana toothbrush and we'll link that one in the show notes because it's great for them to chew on.

It's a silicone toy, it has a couple different areas that they can chew and it sort of has different textures and stiffness of the silicone. And you can also use it as a toothbrush if you would like.

But yeah, babies seem to really like that. And then I'll link a couple other silicone toys that I like for teething. There are a few different ones and all of those are really nice just to have different textures for your baby to chew on.

Toothbrushing and Fluoride Guidance

A bandana bib can be helpful when your baby is teething because it can help catch that extra drool. Some babies get really drooly with those front teeth and so having a bib will help to protect their clothes and also so that they don't get so cold from all that droal dripping and making their clothing wet.

If your baby's getting a drool rash, you could use some kind of a barrier cream for that. So something like Aquaphor or Vaseline is nice. It's just something petroleum based to keep that skin from getting the droel on it so that it doesn't get irritated.

And if they're starting to get a drill rash that goes all the way into their neck folds, then you might want to also consider an anti-fungal cream. So something like Clotrimazole or Turbinifin is great for that.

And you can just put that in the creases. If it's looking really red and raw in there, or it is pink with little tiny dots called satellite lesions around it, that can be signs that it has colonized with some yeast and it could respond to that antifungal cream.

Also, if it isn't going away with the Aquaphor or Vaseline on there it might be colonised with that yeast. So you could try that Some teething crackers are nice and those are usually rice flour based and they start off crunchy, but then they immediately get soggy when they get wet.

So those, are safe for babies to chew on and, they can feel really good for them to, chew, on. And then, there'll just like suck on it and it'll dissolve in their mouth and then can swallow it, and not be a choking hazard.

Some, teeting crackers or rice rusks are really, good. Things that you don't need. So the homeopathic teething tablets I found are not super helpful. And it's several years ago now, but there was a recall on the Highlands brand teeting tablets because some of them that were contaminated with Belladonna, which was, it actually was implicated in the death of several children.

You don't need a baby toothbrush necessarily, just any child toothbrush is fine. And I really don' like those finger toothbrushes, like the ones that go over your finger to brush your baby's teeth, because as soon as they're teething, they start biting and they will bite your fingers and it hurts.

So I don"t like these ones very much. Also, you don't need practice toothpaste.

Recommended Teething Toys and Drool Care

I've seen a lot of baby toothpaste that's fluoride-free and it just isn't really helpful. The idea is to get them used to having toothpaste, but it's not doing anything for them or for their teeth, so just brushing with water until they're able to use fluorid toothpaste is the best.

They don't need dental floss yet because their teeth aren't usually touching each other and, you know, once they get older and they start to have all of their teats, they can start flossing.

Also, mouthwash is something that you can't use until kids are old enough to spit, which is usually a few years of age, so you don' t need anything like that for them.

There are wooden teething toys available, and I don't usually like those just because they can, over time, get splintery and, you know, that's, You don' want that.

You want splinters in your baby's gum. I like the silicone ones a bit better for that I've seen these teething mitts, which are something that just it looks like a mitten with some rubber or silicone on it for your baby to chew on.

Those don't stay on super well. And from what I found, my children and children in my practice just don' t seem to really like them very much. They're usually kind of heavy, too, for them.

So don t usually recommend those. You don"t need an amber teathing necklace. That's something. Amber is thought to have succinic acid in it, which is anti-inflammatory, but studies have shown that not enough of it gets through the skin to actually have anti inflammatory effects.

It's more of a homeopathic thing. So the amber teething necklaces, they're not for chewing on. They're meant to be worn and supposed to anti inflammatory.

they work in sort of homeopathy way. Some parents have told me they felt like it really helped a lot, but I feel like overall they don't really do that much and could potentially be dangerous, because if the baby bites off one of the beads they could choke on it, or if a necklace gets caught on something they can strangle from it.

So we usually recommend it against amber teething necklaces. for feeding stuff. Once your baby is six months of age or older, you can start feeding them some foods.

And I like to have a bowl that has a suction cup on the back of it to put the sort of purees or rice cereal if you're doing that in, because those will stick to the table and babies just love to grab stuff and dump it and throw it.

So if it's got a nice suction on back, I'll link those ones that I liked that have good suction cups on them. those can be really helpful to have. They also sell these things that are a plate and placemat in all-in-one, and those are silicone.

And those do also stick to a flat table. So if your baby's eating at the table with their high chair, then you could get one of those and they'll stay still really nicely.

three or four segments in them for different things. So once your baby's old enough to pick up foods and put them in their mouth, they like to have things separated like that and then they can pick the foods out themselves without dumping it on the floor.

A high chair is something that you'll need once your baby's able to sit. There's a couple of different kinds of high chairs you can get. Some that have trays on them, some that just pull up to the table without a tray, and then there are some travel ones that can be put on the floor or you could clip it to a chair.

Teething Products to Skip

It has two clips, one that goes around the back of the chair and one goes under the So any of those can work all high chairs are pretty much created equal just find one that's easy to clean because it's gonna get gross and one you just feel like looks nice in your house any any those just personal preference are fine.

Some really small spoons and forks can be helpful when your baby's first learning to eat. Not the child-sized ones, but the really, really smaller ones that are made for babies.

And I can link some in the show notes here. I like the newbie spoons because there's three different ones and those can pick up liquids that're of different textures but also can work as teething toys for them.

They're plastic that's then coated with silicone. And I can also link a baby spoon and fork set that I liked because it was really, really short and small and easy to grip.

It was wide, so my baby could really hold onto it well and start to use that. They are not going to be using spoons and forks themselves when they're first eating, but somewhere between 9 and 12 months of age, they can start

using that or trying to us it.

Water bottles are nice, and your baby can start having water once they start eating food. I usually recommend offering one ounce of water for each ounce that they eat.

They don't necessarily have to drink that much, but you don' t need to offer any more than that to them. And you can just give them water in a regular bottle, like a baby bottle.

But also if you wanted to get a water bottle, my favorite one is the Camelback and just because it has this nice silicone thing at the top to suck on, it doesn't come out super fast.

It has like a nice flow to it and your baby can suck it while it's sitting down. Like they don't have to tip it up to drink out of it. You can also do sippy cups and there's a couple of different kinds of sippy cups.

There's the kind that has like a magic ring or 360 ring around the top and they suck on it just like they would on a regular cup, but that silicone ring keeps the water inside of the cup so that it doesn't spill out if they throw it or dump it.

And you can also just do open cups, like plastic or silicone cups or metal even. But your baby will probably throw them. So not glass, not ceramic, because those can be dangerous.

Small cups that your maybe can hold are good. And I actually had a pediatric therapist tell me that she recommends those little shot glasses that are the Solo Cup brand.

They're just one ounce each. and they're really small and really easy for babies to pick up. The only downside with that is they're disposable and if your baby squeezes it, it can crack and break, and it could also be sharp if it cracks.

So use with caution if you're doing those ones. And then you'll need some bibs, of course, for your babies to keep their clothing clean.

Feeding Gear for Starting Solids

If you don't mind them getting dirty, I guess you really don' t have to have a bib, but it is nice to And they also make these bib shirts that I really love and those are great because it's just, you know, it has sleeves that go all the way down to their wrists and it also has a pouch in the front to catch any food that falls.

So I found that the bibs shirts are the most helpful for babies who are starting to feed themselves in terms of keeping them clean. Things you don't necessarily need.

You don' really need plastic bowls, plates, and cups other than those ones that stick down, just because, like I said, the kids will likely take them, dump them or throw them.

So anything that's not stuck down like that, that is just plastic, they probably don''t need You don't need kid-sized plastic utensils. Once they're old enough to use utensil, they could use regular ones.

You can do plastic if you're worried about your child poking themselves in the mouth with a fork, but generally you can just use normal utensiles once they are big enough for utensles.

So pouches, they make pouch food or reusable pouch that you can fill with your own food. Those tend to be very messy because babies don't really understand the concept of like, you know, squeezing gently and putting it in their mouth.

Sometimes they'll squeeze it while it's in there mouth and just get too much and spit it out. sometimes they will squeeze when it is out of their mouths and it just goes everywhere.

So I'm not a huge fan of pouch. those can be good for toddlers. But again, they don't really need them. They're not great for oral motor development. But if you have a kid that loves pouches, it is okay.

It is an option to have baby food on the go. For little ones, especially the younger babies that aren't feeding themselves yet, if do do pouch as a portable form of babyfood, you can just squeeze it into a bowl and then feed it to them with a spoon.

You don't necessarily need to buy baby food. They do make baby for different stages like purees and tiny cut up pieces for them to pick up. You can also just give them normal food and I'm a big fan of babies eating actual food, so whatever you're having for dinner or lunch or breakfast, you can just, when they're really small, puree it and blend it for then or if you are doing baby lead weaning, You can cut it up into pieces that are safe for them to eat, and they can feed themselves that way.

So just regular adult food is fine for babies. Remember that babies who are less than a year old cannot have anything that contains honey. Even stuff that's cooked with honey, like honey nut Cheerios or honey graham crackers or Honey Ham or honeymoon mustard.

Anything with Honey in it for a baby's less a than year is not recommended because there's a risk of botulism. but over a year of age they can have things with honey.

And then also babies who are less than a years should not be drinking straight cow's milk.

What Babies Do and Don't Need for Feeding

It's okay for them to have milk based products and it's good for to them have to things like cheese, butter, yogurt, but once they're over year they start drinking cow milk they don't really need it.

And there has been a push to move away from cow's milk by pediatricians lately, just because milk is really filling and doesn't have a lot of good nutrition in it, I mean, cow milk has made for baby cows.

It's not really made from baby humans. So it's a good source of protein and calcium and fat, but you can find protein, calcium, and in just about everything else.

If they're eating a very good diet, they really don' actually need milk ever. And rice cereal or oat cereal are two things that we're also starting to move away from in the pediatric community.

I like rice serial as a first training food just because you mix it with breast milk or formula and it doesn't have a lot of flavor. So it really just has texture to it.

And you just mix enough to get it to the texture of mashed potatoes and you can feed it them. You can see if your baby's ready to start having solids by trying with that rice cereal.

I've seen a lot of kids with rashes from oat cereal, like eczema or diaper raches after eating the oat's cereal I usually don't recommend oat serial at all.

And the rice serial just really as a practice food. Then once they're able to eat foods, you don' necessarily need that anymore. One thing I did with my rice cereal once my baby was eating foods is I would mix it with things that were a little bit more liquid like yogurt just to make it thicker and easier for them to pick up and use a spoon to eat.

But yeah, you don't really need to keep buying rice cereals, maybe just like a one-time purchase to try out or not even at all. It's okay to start with just regular foods.

Right, I hope this was helpful for teething and feeding. Check out the other episodes in this season and also earlier in the series. Season one is all about the first year of life and there is an episode on feeding and teeting in there.

season two is for ages one to three and I talk about picky eaters in that one. And then season three is holistic and alternative things that you can use for your children if they're not feeling well.

I hoped this is helpful. Next time we're gonna be talking about apps and electronics. Thanks for listening. Remember all of the links from this episode are in the show notes and you can always go to my linktree which is l-i-n-k-t-r dot e-e slash d- r- k- e i- m.

If you know anybody who is pregnant or has a little baby tell them about this show. Maybe they would like to listen to this podcast they might find something helpful in here.

And if you know any friends who are pregnant and want to get them something for their baby shower, I would definitely recommend my book, The Baby Manual.

It's meant to be all inclusive. Really, all the questions that arise in the first year of your baby's life are in that book. So Baby manual is also linked in The Show Notes and on my link tree.

Have a wonderful day.