

Thumbs & Soothers

Sucking is normal for babies, it helps them relax



Soothers, Thumbs & Fingers



- Sucking is perfectly normal for babies, most stop by age 2
- If choosing to introduce a soother do it after baby is comfortable with breastfeeding*
- Choose a soother that is in **one-piece**
- Do not dip soother in sugar or honey
- Avoid cleaning soother with your mouth, this can transfer **cavity-causing bacteria** to the child
- Try to stop thumb and soother habits by 3 years of age
- Long term soother use and thumb sucking can create crowded, crooked teeth or bite problems
- **After age 3**, it is time to stop the sucking habit

Try This!

Use a soother instead of a bottle to comfort your child. Bottle use is linked to cavities!

Did You Know...

Singing, Rocking, and cuddling are other great ways to soothe your baby!

Breaking the habit...

- **Praise and reward your child** when they do not suck
- Children often suck to relax and reduce anxiety, so finding a way to reduce your child's anxiety may help
- Harsh words, teasing, or punishment are not the best ways to get rid of habits
- **Visit the dentist by your child's first birthday!** Dentists can watch the growth of your child's teeth!
- Ask your health care professional for more information

*Health Canada recommends exclusive breastfeeding for six months and sustained breastfeeding for two years and beyond.



For more information, visit Healthy Smile Happy Child at:
http://www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/preventill/oral_child.php

