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Quality Care For Kids

A newsletter for Scott County
Child Care Providers

(written by Jane Matzen, RN and Heidi Hotvedt, RN)

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Comfort Measures for Infants Who are Teething

Teething is a normal part of childhood. Children have about 20 teeth erupt from the time they are 6 months to about age 3. Symptoms of teething may include tender and swollen gums, a low-grade temperature (less than 100.4 degrees F.) and drooling.

Teething medications are not recommended by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Teething gels that contain benzocaine (such as Orajel and Anbesol) can cause a rare but sometimes life-threatening disorder in which the amount of oxygen carried through the blood stream is greatly reduced. Also, pediatricians warn that these gels can numb the back of a child's throat and interfere with a baby's ability to swallow.

Herbal and homeopathic teething medications

(such as Hyland's teething tablets and gel or amber teething beads) are also not recommended.

Local stores sell the teething medications listed above. Parents can easily buy them.

What can be done to prevent parents from asking child care providers to give these teething medications to babies and children?

Consider creating a policy that requires a written order from the child's health care provider (along with written permission from the parents) for all medications which includes over-the-counter medications. This will greatly reduce the times that parents ask child care providers to give their children unnecessary and potentially harmful medications.

What can be safely done to ease swollen, sore gums of infants that are teething?

- A fluid-filled teething ring that is chilled in the refrigerator is soothing to sore gums.
- Some parents may wish to avoid plastics (with phthalates/BPA). Silicone and latex chewy toys may be provided by parents for their infants to chew on.
- Follow health care provider's written instructions for safe dosage of acetaminophen or Ibuprofen if these over-the-counter pain medications are deemed necessary by the infant's health care provider.

Contact your local child care nurse consultant for more information. Or go to www.healthychildren.org and search "teething".

Call your Child Care Nurse Consultant if you have any questions about child health and safety, or any special training needs.



SIDS Awareness Month

October is Sudden Infant Death (SIDS) Awareness Month. Did you know that:

- SIDS is the leading cause of death in infants between 1 month & 1 year.
- 20% of SIDS deaths happen while the infant is at child care.
- Each year, about 4000 infants in the US die unexpectedly during sleep time from SIDS, accidental suffocation, or unknown causes.

Iowa child care providers are required to follow safe sleep practices and are encouraged to have a safe sleep policy. In a recent survey of Iowa child care providers, 46% reported they did not have a safe sleep policy. For more information:

- Attend a "Safe Sleep 2015" DHS approved training.
- Download a sample "Safe Sleep Policy" from www.idph.state.ia.us/hcci
- Go to www.nichd.nih.gov/sids/sids.cfm

Protect yourself and the ones you care for!

It's that time of year again to get your influenza "flu" vaccination. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children age 6 months and older get the flu vaccine each year. Child care providers should also receive annual influenza vaccination. Contact your health care provider to schedule an appointment.