



# doctor Q&A

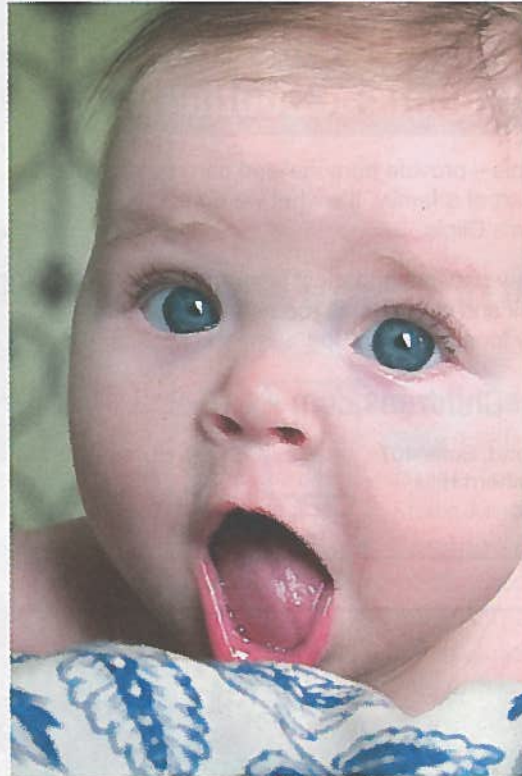
## babies and tastebuds

**Q** Our baby daughter's tongue seems unusually smooth; it doesn't have the little bumps that her older sister's tongue has. Is this a sign of something serious?

Those little bumps on the tongue are called papillae. Papillae function primarily as taste receptors, but they also provide the rough surface to push food around. A tongue that does not have papillae, giving the appearance of a smooth tongue, is known as glossitis.

Glossitis can be a serious condition so it is important to consult with your pediatrician and treat the underlying condition. There are a variety of possible causes:

- Bacterial, fungal or viral infections
- Vitamin and nutritional deficiencies
- Decreased saliva production or dehydration
- Medication
- Allergic reaction
- Mechanical/surface irritation (e.g. hot or spicy foods)
- Inherited condition



In most cases, glossitis is painful and is often marked by an inflamed and swollen tongue. However, it may be painless if the condition is inherited. Typical treatment of glossitis includes oral or topical prescription medications. This is definitely a condition that you should bring to the attention of your pediatrician so that your daughter receives the most appropriate treatment for her specific diagnosis.

## young kids dealing with warts

**Q** My 10-year-old is currently on medication in hopes of getting rid of warts on his fingers. He also plays ice hockey and wraps his fingers with Band-Aids before putting on his hockey gloves. Can the wart virus be living inside his gloves? What is the best way to deal with his warts?

Warts are small, fleshy growths most commonly found on areas of skin with rough surfaces, such as the palms of the hands, fingers, elbows, knees and the soles of the feet. Most warts are painless unless it is on a part of the body accustomed to rubbing or pressure like the ball of the foot.

Warts are caused by a viral infection known as human papillomavirus (HPV). Treatment usually consists of topical acids, astringents or freezing therapy, all of which can be found at the local drug store. Resistant warts can be treated by your pediatrician with stronger topical agents such as liquid nitrogen or salicylic acid. While some warts disappear without treatment, it is quite common for them to reappear. Biting, cutting or trying to pick the wart is not recommended since it will likely spread the virus and cause further inflammation or infection. It is possible that the virus is now in the hockey gloves so the time may be right to purchase new ones. In the meantime, applying Band-Aids to prevent the spread of the virus is a healthy practice.