

## Toothpaste tips for sensory comfort (plain version)

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### **Environment and positioning**

Manage the sensory environment as far as possible and help your child to get into a comfortable position before you start.

### **Using deep pressure to prepare**

Try a hand and arm massage.

Give your child something to squeeze, punch or pull.

Try a face massage or press cheeks with flat palms (even better if they can do this themselves).

### **Limit unexpected sensations**

Push toothpaste down into bristles so blobs don't fall off into the mouth.

Have a flannel or cloth ready for dribbles.

Consider covering clothes with a towel.

Try absorbent wrist bands to catch drips.

### **Discomfort with toothpaste on tongue or lips**

Try a sip of water through a straw or suck on a clean, damp (but not wet) flannel.

Wipe slowly with medium pressure.

Press lips with pads of fingers or a familiar toy to apply calming deep pressure. This can help 'rub out' unpleasant sensations.

### **Finish with a calming deep pressure activity**

This could be a big bear hug, a comforting swaddle in a towel or a length of stretch fabric, tightly hugging a soft toy or cushion, pressing firmly into each other's hands, a 'tug of war' with a towel or pressing hands firmly against a wall with arms and body straight. Teach your child to press their own face with their palms.

