Stay Away From Homeopathic Teething Remedies Warns the FDA

By Julianna LeMieux — September 30, 2016

A teething baby is a challenge for the most level-headed experienced parent.

Teething can bring sleepless nights full of non-stop crying. Although seeking out one of the teething products marketed to ease the baby's pain may be tempting - the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning against it.

A recent FDA news release [1] cautions that homeopathic teething tablets and gels may be harmful to babies and children and recommends not using them. Possible complications to be aware of when using these homeopathic teething remedies are "seizures, difficulty breathing, lethargy, excessive sleepiness, muscle weakness, skin flushing, constipation, difficulty urinating, or agitation" and any of the above should result in seeking medical care.

The FDA does not approve homeopathic teething remedies and are unaware of any benefit from using them. Although the amount of harm that can be done to babies is unclear, the FDA reported [2] in 2010 on the highly toxic plant belladonna (nicknamed "deadly nightshade") contained in Hyland's teething tablets. When the Hyland's teething tablets were tested for amounts of belladonna, the results showed variation between tablets.

CVS has taken swift action and is already removing any product belonging to this category from its shelves. [3] In addition, they have placed a "do not sell" block on these products, in the event that a customer attempts to purchase one of them.

The products include:

- Baby Orajel Naturals Gel for Teething Pain, .33 oz
- Baby Orajel Naturals Gel for Teething Pain Nighttime Formula, .33 oz
Because the FDA is actively investigating these products, they encourage anyone that has had an adverse reaction to these homeopathic teething remedies to go to the FDA's MedWatch Adverse Event reporting program [4] to fill out a notification form.

So, for all of us with little ones who still have gummy smiles, get the cool washcloths and teething rings ready and pass on the homeopathic gels and tablets. Getting through teething the old fashioned way is not fun, but, a baby crying at home because of a sore mouth is far better than a baby in the hospital with belladonna poisoning.