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:Is thumb sucking bad?

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\*Yes and no. First, it must be understood that thumb sucking is a "natural reflex". An ultrasound test on a developing baby will often show him or her sucking a thumb. When this habit goes on for too long, however, orthodontic problems can often occur. By the age of six or seven, the child's permanent teeth are just beginning to arrive. Before then, thumb sucking will cause few problems. After permanent teeth arrive, abnormal pressure from the thumb can cause the front upper teeth to become "bucked". The bottom front teeth then become crowded backward. A misalignment of the teeth occurs. So, how do you stop thumb sucking for your four or five year old? Some have found gloving the hand, dipping the thumb in vinegar and increased attention to the child help. In the end, though, treatment depends on how long and often the thumb sucking occurs. To avoid any permanent damage, don't delay your attempts to stop this habit.



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