



Keep your gums and baby healthy

Your mouth is an important part of your health—especially during pregnancy. Gum disease in a mother can affect her unborn baby. It can even lead to early birth.

If a baby is born too early, they may have health problems like:

- Trouble breathing or eating
- Difficulties with learning or speech
- Poor vision or hearing

Stay healthy—for you and your baby. Take care of your teeth every day!



Questions?

Scan the QR code or visit TennCare.RenaissanceBenefits.com for more information.



A pregnancy guide to healthy gums





What causes gum disease?

Gum disease starts when sticky bacteria called plaque builds up on your teeth. Not brushing or flossing every day lets plaque grow. Pregnancy hormones can make gums more sensitive and swollen.

Smoking and poor eating habits can also raise your risk.

Watch for these signs:

- Bad breath or taste
- Red, swollen or tender gums
- Gums that bleed when brushing
- Gums pulling away from teeth
- Pain when chewing
- Pus between teeth and gums
- Hard yellow tartar on teeth

How to keep your gums healthy

Good habits help protect both you and your baby.

- Brush your teeth twice a day
- Floss once a day
- Eat fruits, vegetables and healthy snacks like cheese
- Take vitamins your doctor gives you
- Avoid smoking and alcohol
- Visit your dentist regularly

Brush and floss every day

Brushing and flossing remove plaque before it can cause gum disease. Brush your teeth in the morning and before bed. Use floss to clean between teeth where your toothbrush can't reach. Your gums may bleed at first—this should stop once they become healthier.



One more tip!

Moms can pass mouth bacteria to their babies by kissing them or tasting their food. To lower bacteria, chew gum with xylitol after meals.

What is xylitol?

Xylitol is a natural sweetener found in fruits and veggies. It stops acid and helps fight germs that cause cavities and gum disease.

You can find xylitol in:

- Gum and mints
- Cough drops and throat lozenges
- Toothpaste and mouthwash
- Kids' chewable vitamins

Look for "xylitol" on the label.

