



Staying healthy for baby

Pregnancy is an exciting time, and expectant mothers have to focus on what is best for them and a healthy baby. Exercise, a diet full of vitamins and nutrients and plenty of doctor appointments take priority. But what about dental care?

With typical hormone changes during pregnancy, expectant mothers may notice a change in their oral health. Although periodontal (gum) disease affects 40% of all pregnant women, more than half of women do not visit the dentist while pregnant, and only half of those who experience oral health problems get appropriate and timely care. Waiting on dental treatment, expectant mothers may put themselves and their baby at risk.

In fact, if the expectant mother has high levels of the bacteria that causes cavities, it may contribute to a low infant birth weight.¹

Dental care during pregnancy is generally safe—including the use of x-rays, pain medication and local anesthesia.² Don't let your oral health suffer during pregnancy. Maintain regular dental appointments before pregnancy, and schedule at least one dental visit during pregnancy ideally in the second trimester. Let your dental team know you are pregnant, and provide your due date.

Did you know?

One in four pregnant women has decayed teeth or gum disease.³



Quick bites

Caring for your teeth during pregnancy

- Schedule at least one dental visit during pregnancy. Let your dental team know you are pregnant, and provide your due date.
- If you suffer from morning sickness, rinse your mouth with a teaspoon of baking soda in a cup of water to stop acid from attacking your teeth.
- Eat a nutritional diet with fewer foods high in sugar; avoid juice, fruit-flavored drinks and soda pop.
- After eating, chew xylitol-containing gum and similar products, like mints, to help reduce bacteria that can cause tooth decay.

1. Li, Y et al., "Mode of Delivery and Other Maternal Factors Influence the Acquisition of Streptococcus Mutans in Infants," *Journal of Dental Research* 84, no. 9 (2005): 806–11. 2. National Maternal & Child Oral Health Research Center, "Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: A National Consensus Statement," web. 3. American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, "Dental X-Rays, Teeth Cleanings = Safe During Pregnancy," web.