

ORAL HEALTH IN PREGNANCY

Did you know?

Your oral health is connected not only to your own well-being but also to your baby's. By caring for your oral health, you're also caring for your baby.

HOW CAN PREGNANCY AFFECT ORAL HEALTH?

Pregnancy can have a number of effects on oral health. Some of the most common include:

- ➔ **Hormonal changes:** gums may become swollen, tender and more likely to bleed. This is known as pregnancy gingivitis.
- ➔ **Morning sickness:** some women may experience vomiting during pregnancy. This can increase the acidity in your mouth, which can damage tooth enamel and increase the risk of tooth decay.
- ➔ **Cravings:** pregnant women may experience cravings for particular foods. Frequent snacking on sweet foods can increase the risk of tooth decay.
- ➔ **Dry mouth:** some pregnant women may experience dry mouth, which can increase the risk of tooth decay and other oral health problems.
- ➔ **Difficulty maintaining oral hygiene:** pregnancy symptoms such as morning sickness may make it difficult to brush and floss properly.



WHAT YOU CAN DO



Practice good oral hygiene: brush for 2 minutes, 2x a day with fluoride toothpaste and clean between your teeth every day using floss or interdental brushes.



Visit a dentist for regular check-ups and cleaning: if you notice any symptoms during your pregnancy, tell your dentist as soon as possible. They may recommend more frequent professional cleanings to help keep your mouth healthy.



Protect your mouth during morning sickness: if you vomit, rinse your mouth with water, then rub fluoride toothpaste onto your teeth using a finger or use a fluoride mouthwash. Wait at least 30 minutes before brushing your teeth.



Eat a healthy, balanced diet: a baby's teeth begin developing before birth, so good nutrition during pregnancy supports both healthy tooth development and your baby's overall development.



Limit sugary foods and drinks: if you do have them, restrict them to mealtimes rather than between meals to help reduce the risk of tooth decay.

HOW CAN ORAL DISEASES AFFECT PREGNANCY?



Preterm birth: periodontal disease, also known as gum disease, may increase the risk of preterm birth and having a baby with a low birth weight.



Gestational diabetes: pregnant women with gum disease may also have a higher risk of developing gestational diabetes, a type of diabetes that develops during pregnancy.



Preeclampsia: gum disease may be associated with an increased risk of preeclampsia, a serious pregnancy complication.

WHERE TO GO NEXT



Read the **Oral health for infants** fact sheet to learn how to care for your baby's mouth once they are born.



World Oral Health Day
20 March



EVERYONE,
EVERYWHERE
IS INVITED
TO JOIN US

#GENERATIONSMILE
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