

ORAL HEALTH & PREGNANCY

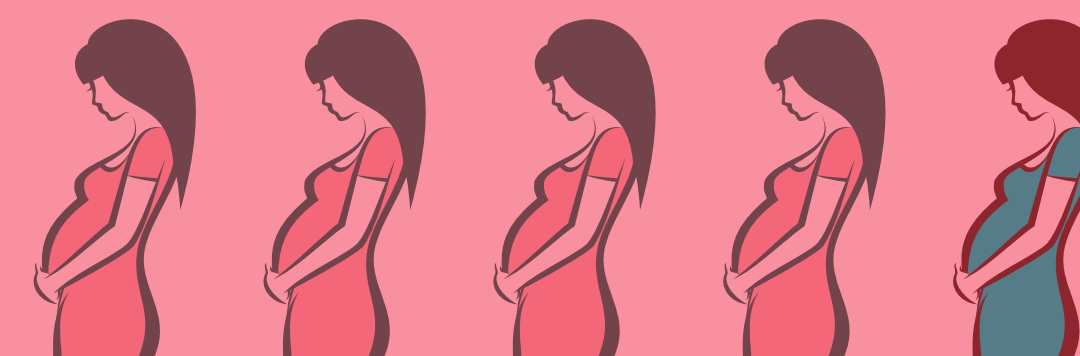
Dental treatment is safe throughout pregnancy, and it is effective in improving and maintaining oral health. Hormonal changes and reduced immune system during pregnancy make the gum and teeth more sensitive, leading to higher risk of dental problems and undesirable birth outcomes.

60-70%

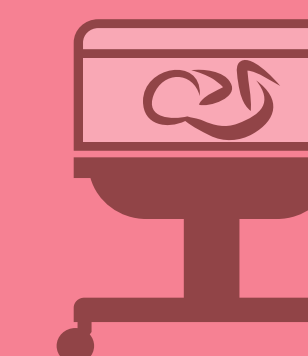
of pregnant women have Gingivitis (the most common dental problem)

30%

of pregnant women suffer from periodontal (gum) disease



Evidence shows that **4 in 5** pregnant women reported to have dental problems, yet only **1/2** actually went for a dental visit during pregnancy



Poor oral hygiene and gum infection can lead to low birth weight babies, pre-term deliveries and higher risk of early caries among infants

Common Oral Problems During Pregnancy:



Gum disease: The two most common problems are Pregnancy Gingivitis (a mild form of gum disease caused by bacteria that leads the gums to be red, tender and sore) and Periodontitis (a serious gum infection that damages the soft tissue and destroys the bone that supports your teeth).



Tooth erosion: Vomiting (morning sickness) and gastric acid reflux during pregnancy dissolves away the surface of the tooth (enamel) leading to tooth erosion.



Dental caries: Increased acidity in the mouth, high intake of sugary snacks and drinks, as well as poor oral health maintenance may result in gradual destruction of a tooth.

Tips for Good Oral Health:



Brush your teeth at least twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste and soft-bristle toothbrush.



Clean between your teeth using floss once a day.



Limit your intake of sugary food and drinks and replace them with food high in calcium, especially when snacking between meals.



Visit your dentist on regular basis, as it is safe during pregnancy.



Drink lots of water. Fluoridated water is safe and effective in preventing tooth decay.

References

1. Hartnett, E. et al. (2016) <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0884217516301599> | 2. M. Naseem et al. (2015) <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352003515000404> | 3. California Dental Association Foundation, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists District IX (2010) http://www.cdafoundation.org/Portals/0/pdfs/poh_guidelines.pdf | 4. Cigna Corporation (2015) https://www.cigna.com/assets/docs/newsroom/cigna-study-healthy-smiles-for-mom-and-baby-2015.pdf?WT.z_nav=newsroom%2Fdental-study%3BBody%3BDownload%20Executive%20Summary | 5. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (2013) <http://www.acog.org/Resources-And-Publications/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Health-Care-for-Underserved-Women/Oral-Health-Care-During-Pregnancy-and-Through-the-Lifespan>