

Four recommendations for a healthy mouth during pregnancy

✓ Daily Brushing and Flossing

Brush your teeth and gums at least twice a day using a soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste. Floss at least once daily!

✓ Dental Check-up

Visit the dentist early in your pregnancy. Ask your doctor for a **Pregnancy and Oral Health Referral Form**, which will let your dentist know more about you and your pregnancy.

✓ Healthy Diet and Limited Snacking

Choose foods low in sugar. Be sure to get enough calcium for development of your baby's teeth and bones.

✓ Stop Tobacco Use

Tobacco use is unhealthy for both baby and mother. Call 1-800 NO BUTTS or 575-6043 for assistance. Avoid second-hand smoke from others.



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Family Action at 586-3032 or fasc@fasc.org

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Tips for Pregnant Women

X-rays (radiographs) Can be used safely. Discuss with your dentist if they are needed.

Gagging Some women have more saliva during pregnancy. Try breathing slowly through your nose when brushing your back teeth, as this usually helps reduce some of the nausea.

Bleeding gums Regular flossing will usually decrease bleeding gums. Hormonal changes can cause gums to swell and trap food. Check with your dentist if bleeding continues.

Morning sickness If you vomit during pregnancy it's important to rinse your mouth out with water afterwards. Brushing your teeth immediately after vomiting can cause your teeth to wear away. Stomach acids soften teeth, making brushing too abrasive.

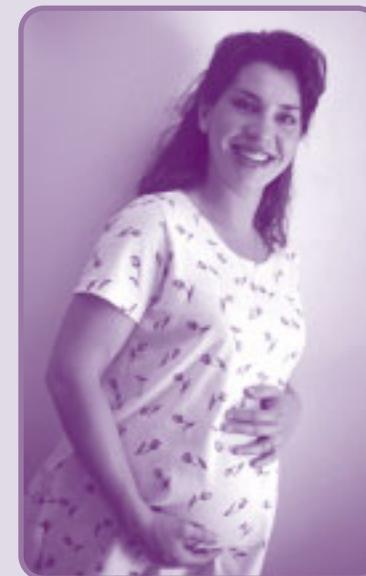
Dental Emergencies If you do experience a dental emergency, get prompt help. Your dentist may want to consult with your doctor if anesthesia or medications are needed. Certain drugs can affect the development of your child's teeth.

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Pregnancy and Oral Health

How your dental health affects your baby



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Your dental health affects your baby

① While you are pregnant:

Due to hormonal changes during pregnancy, your teeth and gums require special care.

Brush and floss daily. It is recommended that **all women** visit a dentist early in pregnancy to identify and treat dental problems. Dental treatment for pregnant women can be performed safely without pain. Call and arrange an appointment as soon as you learn you are pregnant. The best time to have a dental exam is mid-pregnancy (4–6 months).

Eat smart for healthy teeth. Rinse your mouth with water after meals and snacking. Snack less often and eat sweets at the end of a meal instead of between meals. Limit sweet and starchy snacks (like potato chips), soda pop and even fruit juices.

Select Snacks Low in Sugar:

Cheese	Nuts, Seeds
Dried meat stick	Plain yogurt
Salad	Low fat milk
Vegetables	Popcorn

Baby teeth are already forming in the womb, so **get plenty of calcium.**

Calcium is found in milk, cheese, dried beans, and leafy green vegetables. If your diet is low in these foods, ask your prenatal provider about a calcium supplement.



If you have periodontal disease, your baby might be born too early or at a low birth weight.

Periodontal (gum) disease is an infection of the gums and bone holding teeth in place. The gums become red, swollen and can bleed during brushing. **A dentist can treat gum disease safely during pregnancy.**

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT DENTAL SERVICES FOR PREGNANT WOMEN?

If you have Medi-Cal you also have Denti-Cal and can receive many dental services. If you need help finding a dentist that accepts Denti-Cal Insurance, call **1-800-427-8982** for a referral.

If you do not have health insurance for your pregnancy, please call 1-800-427-8982.

② After your baby is born:

Parents can pass dental disease to their babies. Like the common cold, the germs that cause tooth decay can be spread from your mouth to your child's mouth. This usually happens from age 6 months to two years.

Visit the dentist now to be certain you have good dental health.

Now is the time to learn how to keep your child cavity-free.

- ✓ **Check your baby's teeth.** Healthy teeth should be all one color. Learn to “lift the baby's lip” to check for spots or stains on the teeth; take your baby to the dentist by their first birthday.
- ✓ **Clean your baby's teeth** as soon as they come in with a clean, soft cloth or a baby's toothbrush. Gently clean the teeth at least once a day. It's best to clean them right before bedtime.
- ✓ **Prevent baby bottle tooth decay.** Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle at night or at naptime. If you do put your baby to bed with a bottle, fill it only with **water**. Near his/her first birthday, teach your child to drink from a cup instead of a bottle.
- ✓ **Fluoride drops** (prescribed by a doctor or dentist) are important for babies starting at 6 months of age.