

Dental Health During Pregnancy

If you are pregnant, your oral health is as important to your baby as your overall health. Dental disease can have serious effects on you and your baby during and after pregnancy—from the possibility of low birth weight to passing on the bacteria that cause tooth decay.

It's common for pregnant women to develop "pregnancy gingivitis," an inflammation of the gums and surrounding tissues. Symptoms include gums that become swollen and bleed easily when brushed. Some studies have shown that women with gum disease may be up to 7.5 times more likely to have a pregnancy complication. So pay extra attention to getting rid of plaque while pregnant by taking extra care and time to brush and floss.

It's safe to see your dentist while pregnant. In fact, it should be part of your pre-natal care. You should visit your dentist during the first trimester for a dental cleaning. If dental work is needed, the second trimester is the safest time to get it done.

X-rays should be avoided, but they are acceptable if they are necessary. Any procedure that can wait until after the baby is born—including X-rays—should. But if you have a dental emergency in the third trimester, consult your obstetrician and call your dentist.

