

# PREGNANCY

## AND YOUR TEETH AND GUMS

Oral Health Tips  
for Expectant Mothers



**Health and Community Services**

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**If you are planning to become pregnant, it is a good idea to see a dentist and have any necessary dental treatment done before you are pregnant.**

While you are pregnant it is important to keep healthy, including taking care of your teeth and gums.

It is important to see a dentist at least once during your pregnancy, preferably early, so any treatment can be carried out. Be sure to tell the dentist you are pregnant so he or she can take any necessary precautions. X-rays should not be taken unless absolutely necessary.

Some pregnant women experience morning sickness or may feel stomach sick during the day. Choose a time of day that is best for you to clean your teeth and gums. Rinse often with cool water. A plastic floss holder, found in drug stores, supermarkets and department stores, may help if flossing makes you gag.

Sometimes normal changes in your hormones while you are pregnant may cause your gums to bleed more easily than before you were pregnant, but you still need to clean your teeth and gums every day. If you have persistent bleeding or pain in your gums contact your dentist.

Some pregnant women who have serious gum disease which is not treated may be more likely to have a baby that is born too early and too small. Your dentist can tell you if you have serious gum disease and recommend how to treat it.



Remember, taking care of your teeth and gums helps take care of you and your baby too!

Talk to your dentist and other health care providers about the benefits of breastfeeding for you baby's overall health and dental health.

### **Tips you should follow...**

- Eat healthy foods and avoid sugary snacks such as candy and dried fruit snacks.
- Eat foods high in vitamin C to strengthen your gums. Oranges are very high in vitamin C.
- Brush your teeth with a very soft bristle toothbrush twice a day. Take your time and brush gently.
- Floss your teeth once every day. Be gentle when flossing and remember, flossing is just as important as brushing!

