

# Tooth Tips for Pregnant Women

Fast Facts from Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation's Early Childhood Dental Network

## FOR MOM

- It's extremely important to tell the receptionist you are pregnant when you make your dental appointment. Remind the hygienist and the dentist when you arrive. Certain procedures, like x-rays and pain medication, can harm your unborn child's development.
- Continue to see your dentist for regular cleanings and check ups. This will help keep teeth and gums healthy.
- Certain times during your pregnancy are better than others to receive dental treatment. If possible, hold off on extensive and cosmetic dental care until after your baby is born.
- Brush and floss your teeth three times a day. Keeping your teeth clean, especially around the gum line, cuts down on bacteria.
- If you struggle with morning sickness, switch to a bland-tasting toothpaste or don't brush when symptoms are at their worst. Rinsing with warm water or an antibacterial rinse can also help.
- Seek advice from your dentist or doctor if your gums are sore, swollen or bleeding. These symptoms can be a sign of pregnancy gingivitis or other problems.
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet. It's important for your health and your baby's.



## DID YOU KNOW...

Pregnant women are in a unique situation when it comes to dental care. During pregnancy, your teeth and gums are more susceptible to bacteria due to higher hormone levels. Higher bacteria levels can cause infection that can spread throughout your body and can lead to preterm labor or other complications.

It's important to remember that what happens to your body affects your baby's development, even their future teeth, which begin to develop around the third month of pregnancy!

## FOR NEWBORN BABY

- Starting at birth, gently wipe baby's gums and tongue after each feeding with a moist washcloth.
- Rinse your baby's pacifier with water or replace it with a clean one if it gets soiled. Never "clean" the pacifier with your own mouth. Bacteria can pass from your mouth to your baby's.
- Never let your baby sleep with a bottle. Over time, this can lead to early cavities.
- Never dip your baby's pacifier in honey or other sugary substances. Sugar can lead to future tooth decay and honey contains a bacteria that makes young children sick.

For more information contact: \_\_\_\_\_

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