

# Your Oral Health Matters When You Are Pregnant

During your pregnancy, it is important to take care of your teeth and gums. It is important for you and your baby that you take care of your teeth, eat healthy foods and practice other good health behaviors.

## Tips for good oral health care

- Changes to your body during pregnancy can cause your gums to be sore and swollen and possibly bleed. This is called gingivitis and your dentist can treat it.
- Oral care is safe during pregnancy, and it is important to visit the dentist every 6 months or when you have concerns.
- You should brush at least twice a day and replace your toothbrush every 3 to 4 months.
- Rinse every night with a mouthwash that contains fluoride.
- Eat a variety of healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, dairy products and whole grains.
- If you vomit, it is important to rinse your mouth to keep the acids off your teeth.

## The health of your gums affects the health of your unborn baby

Research shows that a pregnant woman with gum disease has a higher chance of a baby born too small.<sup>1</sup>

Pregnant women should see a dentist at least one time during pregnancy. You can get treatment throughout pregnancy.

## Gum disease

- When you are pregnant, you get gum disease easy.
- Gum disease does not hurt, so you might not know you have it.
- If your gums bleed when you brush, you may have gum disease.
- The best way to stop gum disease is to brush your teeth at least once a day, but twice a day is better.
- If you think you might have gum disease, see your dentist. Early gum disease is easy to treat.



If you need help to find a dentist or have questions about your dental benefits, visit [www.hndental.com](http://www.hndental.com) or call:

Los Angeles County members:  
**1-844-233-4522**

Sacramento County members:  
**1-833-493-0428**

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. PT  
TDD/TTY users should dial  
**1-800-466-7566.**

<sup>1</sup>Offenbacher, Steven, "Periodontal Infection as a Possible Risk Factor for Preterm Low Birth Weight" Journal of Periodontology 1996 October; 67 (10 Suppl): pp. 1103-1113.

Source and website:

*5th Edition Handbook of Pediatric Dentistry*. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), [www.aapd.org](http://www.aapd.org).

This information is not meant to replace medical or dental care. Please always follow your healthcare provider's instructions.

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