

# ORAL HEALTH MATTERS ESPECIALLY DURING PREGNANCY



ALABAMA  
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HEALTH



You regularly see your OBGYN, but are you keeping up with your regular dental appointments?

During pregnancy, you may notice a change in your oral health. If you're experiencing red, swollen or bleeding gums, you're not alone! The good news is that many of these issues are preventable and treatable through regular dental visits and a good at-home oral care routine. Your dental care and prenatal care professionals can provide advice on how to keep your mouth and the rest of your body healthy during pregnancy.

Up to **70%**  
of women experience  
gingivitis during  
pregnancy

## Oral health issues are common during pregnancy

**Common Changes  
During Pregnancy:**

**Oral Health Effects  
You May Not Expect:**

**What You Can Do  
About It:**

 **Hormone Increase**

Hormone changes can bring on gum inflammation (gingivitis).

Choose a toothbrush, toothpaste and rinse that fight gingivitis.

 **Morning Sickness**

Morning sickness with vomiting can increase risk of enamel erosion.

Rinse mouth after vomiting. Use a toothpaste with stannous fluoride daily to help prevent acid erosion.

 **Increased Sugar Intake**

Greater sugar intake can increase risk of cavities.

Try to avoid excessive sugar intake

 **Stronger Gag Reflex**

Stronger gag reflex can make brushing unpleasant.

Find times in the day to brush, floss and rinse when you're feeling your best.

### Myth

If I focus on a daily routine that includes prenatal vitamins, healthy eating and exercise, I am doing everything I can to stay healthy during pregnancy.

### Fact

Professional dental care and a good at-home oral health routine are an essential part of a healthy pregnancy.

### Did You Know?

During pregnancy, increased hormone levels can affect the way your body reacts to plaque that builds up on your teeth, causing redness, swelling and even bleeding gums. This is commonly known as pregnancy gingivitis.

### Steps to maintain good oral health during pregnancy:

- 1 Create a daily at-home oral care routine if you do not already have one.
- 2 Be sure to use products that are proven to fight plaque and gingivitis.
- 3 Make an appointment to see your dentist during pregnancy.

Dentist: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_



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# Prevent Pregnancy-Related Gum Disease



**Periodontal disease:**  
Also known as gum disease, is a chronic, bacteria-induced, inflammatory condition that attacks the gum tissue and in some cases, the bone supporting the teeth.

If left untreated, women who are pregnant may deliver prematurely, or have babies with lower birth weight compared to mothers with healthy gums.

**Brush:**  
Brush your teeth. Brushing after meals helps remove food debris and plaque trapped between your teeth and gums.

**Do NOT**  
share your toothbrush!

**Floss**  
Why? Because plaque causes acid, which can cause cavities and irritate the gums. Brushing and flossing after meals is the best way to remove decay-causing plaque.

For more information visit:  
[adph.org/oralhealth](http://adph.org/oralhealth)  
or contact the Healthy Beginnings Help Line at  
1-800-654-1385

