

I'm pregnant. Do I need to take special care of my mouth?

Hormonal changes when you are pregnant can make your gums sore or swollen and cause bleeding. This is called gingivitis, or pregnancy gingivitis. It may start in the second or third month of pregnancy and last through the eighth month.

Should I go to the dentist when I'm pregnant?

You are eligible for dental care while you are pregnant. The best way to avoid pregnancy-related gum problems is to begin with healthy gums. If you're pregnant, or plan to become pregnant, visit your dentist for an exam.

IMPORTANT: Tell the dental staff if you are pregnant.

Can my dental health affect my baby before birth?

Yes. Infected gums during pregnancy may cause your baby to be born too soon or underweight. If a pregnant woman has unfilled cavities, the cavity-causing germs can pass to her baby.

Why should I take care of my teeth and gums after the baby is born?

About 70% of tooth decay in babies is caused by an infectious disease. Bacteria pass from parents' mouths to a baby's mouth when food or spoons are shared or when an adult cleans a pacifier in his or her mouth. These bacteria can cause cavities in a baby's mouth.

You must be able to chew and swallow food to get the nutrients you need for good health. Poor dental health can affect your speech and self-esteem. Treating dental diseases is expensive. Children and adults may miss time from school or work because of dental pain.

Questions?

Call Jackson Care Connect toll-free at 1-855-722-8208, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m. TTY/TDD users should call 1-800-735-2900.

Your child's smile starts before birth!



How can I get dental care?

Look on your DMAP Medical Care ID card for the name and phone number of your dental care organization (DCO). Call to make an appointment.

What can I do to keep my mouth healthy during and after pregnancy?

- Brush your teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss between teeth once a day.
- Schedule a dentist appointment as soon as possible in your pregnancy.
- Eat a healthy diet that is low in sugar to help prevent tooth decay.

Does a woman lose calcium from “her teeth during pregnancy?

No. The calcium your baby needs comes from your diet, not your teeth. If you don't eat enough calcium, your body will take it from your bones.

Eat healthy foods. Avoid high-fat, high-sugar snacks.

Good nutrition is important for your teeth and gums during pregnancy. A baby's teeth start forming before birth. Your baby's nutrition depends on what you eat. A baby's teeth and bones need calcium to grow.

Eat plenty of foods with calcium, such as non-fat and low-fat milk, cheese and yogurt, dried beans, and leafy green vegetables. Ask your health care provider if you should take a calcium and vitamin D supplement.

Drink at least eight glasses of plain water every day.

What are healthy snacks?

Snack on fresh fruit, vegetables and cheese. Allow yourself a small dessert at the end of a meal instead of eating sweets between meals. Soda pop, sweets and dry salty snacks like potato chips cause tooth decay (cavities).

Where can I get help to buy healthy food?

Call toll-free 1-800-SAFENET to apply for the WIC nutrition program. WIC provides food for pregnant women, breastfeeding women up to 12 months after birth, non-breastfeeding mothers until six months after birth, and children under age five.

Is it OK to smoke when I'm pregnant?

Tobacco is unhealthy for you and secondhand smoke can harm your baby. Smoking can cause dental problems and gum disease. Smokers inhale nicotine and carbon monoxide, which reach the baby through the placenta. Nicotine and carbon monoxide prevent your baby from getting the nutrients and oxygen it needs to grow. Call the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line at 1-877-270-7867 or the Spanish (Español) line at 1-877-266-3863 to get help quitting smoking or chewing tobacco. The TTY/TDD number is 1-877-777-6534.

