



ORAL HEALTH IN PREGNANCY

Many new moms have problems with their teeth and gums during their pregnancy. In fact, the folk expression “Losing a tooth for every child” is based upon real pregnancy-related changes.

One problem that many pregnant women experience is red bleeding gums. This condition, known as “pregnancy gingivitis”, is a form of gum disease which occurs because hormonal changes in pregnancy cause the gums to react differently to oral bacteria and become inflamed. This infection is not healthy and it can lead to tooth loss.

Many new moms complain of having more cavities after having a baby. This is mainly because during the later stages of pregnancy, most women have increased responsibilities to the baby and tend to neglect their own routine of brushing and flossing.

So what can you do to prevent these problems and maintain a healthy smile? Cavities, and gum disease, can be prevented by having more meticulous oral hygiene and more frequent professional cleanings. **It is not only safe, but recommended to have your teeth cleaned by your dentist during your pregnancy.** Make sure that you inform your dental team that you are expecting and that they avoid any x-rays unless absolutely necessary. They should consult with your obstetrician if you need to be placed on any medications or need local anesthetic (Novocaine).

For increased comfort, request that they give you shorter appointments and avoid placing you in a fully reclined position. You should also get the opportunity to change positions frequently in the dental chair.

With some extra attention at home, and care from your dental team, you should be able to avoid any dental problems and keep a healthy attractive smile, no matter how many children you have!

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