

ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY

How does pregnancy affect oral health?

During pregnancy, many parts of your body go through physical changes, including your mouth.

- Pregnancy cravings can cause changes in your eating habits, which put you at risk of developing dental cavities. Snacking can occur more often and consist of sweets, which create the perfect environment for dental cavities to develop.
- Morning sickness can cause tooth erosion due to stomach acid in the mouth.



What are you at risk from?



- **Gingivitis** causes the gums to become swollen, red, and bleed easily.
- **Tooth erosion** happens when acid exposure wears down the tooth's enamel.
- **Dental cavities**, also known as dental caries or tooth decay, are caused by the breakdown of the tooth's enamel by acids.
- **Periodontitis** occurs when plaque grows below the gum line and irritates the gums. The teeth and gums separate which causes the tissues and bones to break down in the mouth.

Quick tips to improve oral health

- Brush your teeth at least twice per day with a fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss your teeth at least once per day.
- Rinse your mouth with 1 tsp of baking soda mixed in a glass of water after being sick to help with morning sickness.
- Drink fluoridated water. Fluoridated water reduces tooth decay in children and adults by about 25%.¹
- Make an appointment to see a dentist.

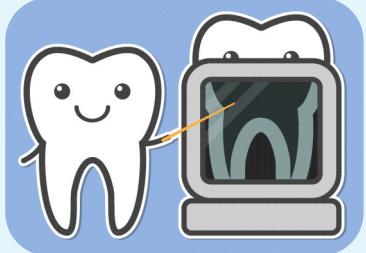


Did you know?

Dental visits and dental x-rays are safe during pregnancy.

Oral health matters!

- Poor oral health is linked to preeclampsia, preterm births, and low birth weight.
- Wisconsin ranks 26th in the U.S. for preterm deliveries and 30th for low birth weights.²
- Between 2016–2020, 48.9% of mothers in Wisconsin reported receiving a dental cleaning during their pregnancy.³
- By visiting your dentist, you and your baby will be protected!



For more information, please visit the Wisconsin Oral Health Program's website:
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/oral-health.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). *Community Water Fluoridation*. www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/index.html
2. National Center for Health Statistics. (2020). *Wisconsin*. [Data set]. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/states/wisconsin/wi.htm
3. Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Wisconsin Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System 2016-2020



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