

# Tooth Tips for Pregnant Women

## For Mom



### DID YOU KNOW . . .

During **pregnancy**, your teeth and gums are more susceptible to cavity-causing bacteria, due to higher hormone levels. Higher bacteria levels can cause infections that can spread throughout your body and could lead to **preterm labor or other complications!**

It's also important to remember that what happens to your body affects your unborn baby's development, even their future teeth (which begin to develop around the third month of pregnancy)!

- It's extremely important to tell the receptionist that you are pregnant when you make your dental appointment, and tell the dentist at the appointment. Certain procedures, like x-rays and pain medication, can harm your unborn child and certain times during your pregnancy are better than others to receive treatment. Leave extensive and cosmetic dental care for when after your baby is born!
- Continue to see your dentist for regular cleanings and check ups. This will help get rid of the cavity-causing bacteria and keep teeth and gums healthy.
- Brush and floss your teeth three times a day, especially concentrating around the gum line.
- If you struggle with morning sickness, switch to a bland-tasting toothpaste or don't brush when symptoms are at their worst. Rinsing with warm water or an antibacterial rinse can also help.
- Seek advice from your dentist or doctor if your gums are sore, swollen or bleeding. This is a sign of pregnancy Gingivitis, which can be an early sign of problems.
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet. It's important for your health and your baby's.

## Once Your Baby is Born

- Starting at birth, gently wipe baby's gums and tongue after each feeding with a clean, moist washcloth.
- Never "clean" your baby's pacifier with your own mouth. Bacteria that causes cavities can pass from your mouth to your baby's. Rinse the pacifier with water or replace it with a clean one if it gets soiled.
- Never let your baby sleep with a bottle. Over time, this can lead to "baby bottle rot" and middle ear problems.
- Never dip your baby's pacifier in honey or other sugary substances. Sugar can lead to future tooth decay and honey contains a bacteria that can make young children sick.



For more information on children's dental care or how to access dental care in west central Minnesota see our website: [ecdn.wcif.org](http://ecdn.wcif.org)

