

# Pregnancy and Your Teeth

What expecting mothers should know



Expecting a baby? Being pregnant has major effects on the body, and your mouth is no exception.

When you're pregnant, you're at higher risk for:

- Tooth decay
- Gum disease (also known as “pregnancy gingivitis”)
- Oral growths called “pregnancy tumors”

These conditions are treatable, so make an appointment with your dentist. Brushing and flossing vigilantly can help fight gum disease and tooth decay, but there's nothing you can do at home to get rid of pregnancy tumors. They usually disappear after birth, or you can ask your dentist to remove them.

**Did you know...?** If you have a moderate to severe gum disease, you may be at higher risk for delivering a pre-term, low-birth weight baby.

# 5 ways to stay healthy

- 1. Visit the dentist.** Let your dentist know how far along you are and if you have any medical conditions or a high-risk pregnancy. Your dentist can help assess your oral health and map out a plan for the rest of your pregnancy.
- 2. Get a dental cleaning.** It's especially important to keep your teeth and gums healthy during pregnancy. Your dental plan may cover an additional cleaning for pregnant women. Check if your plan includes this feature.
- 3. Avoid anesthesia.** Anesthesia during the first trimester may be linked to early miscarriage. If you need any dental work that requires anesthesia, such as a filling or root canal treatment, talk to your dentist about postponing the procedure until the second trimester of your pregnancy.
- 4. Eat well-balanced meals** full of vitamins C, D and phosphorus.
- 5. Protect your teeth.** Morning sickness can be a hassle — and it can wear down your teeth. Exposure to stomach acid dissolves tooth enamel, weakening your teeth's defense against decay. If you suffer from morning sickness, talk to your dentist about ways to reduce the harm, such as using a mouthguard or rinsing with baking soda.

## Enhanced pregnancy benefits

To help you maintain your oral health, Delta Dental offers enhanced benefits during your pregnancy. Enhanced coverage for pregnant women includes an additional exam, cleaning or periodontal procedure as needed, once pregnancy is confirmed. Check your plan booklet to see if your plan includes this feature.



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