

Dental Care During Pregnancy is Safe

If your last visit to the dentist was more than 6 months ago or if you notice any changes in your mouth during pregnancy, schedule an appointment as soon as possible. Routine dental visits are safe during pregnancy, but be sure to let your dental office know what stage of pregnancy you are in when you make your appointment.

Some medications and anesthetics can be used safely during and after dental treatment to make you more comfortable. Inform your dentist of any prescription or over-the-counter medications you are taking. A dental X-ray may be needed for dental treatment or a dental emergency that can't wait until after the baby is born. Don't be afraid of X-rays. Your dentist or hygienist will cover you with a leaded apron that minimizes exposure to the abdomen.

Tips to Stay Mouth Healthy During Pregnancy

- Brush thoroughly for two minutes, twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss between your teeth daily.
- Eat a healthy diet. If you snack, do so in moderation and avoid sugary snacks.
- Visit your dentist. Make sure to tell your dentist that you are pregnant and about any changes you have noticed in your dental health.
- If you need help controlling plaque, your dentist may recommend rinsing at night with a mouthrinse that prevents gum disease. Look for

Nutrition

Nutrition is an important part of a healthy pregnancy. Your baby's teeth will begin to develop between the third and sixth months. To help the teeth form correctly, you need plenty of nutrients, including vitamins A, C, and D, protein, calcium and phosphorous.

While it's normal for a pregnant woman to have the desire to eat more, frequent snacking can increase your risk for cavities. When you do snack, choose foods that are low in sugar and nutritious for you and your baby such as raw fruits and vegetables, yogurt, or cheese, and make sure to follow your physician's advice about diet. If you are queasy or have persistent nausea, try eating small portions of healthy foods throughout the day.



Thank you

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mouthrinses that have the ADA Seal of Acceptance for preventing gum disease to be sure they do what they say.

- If you have morning sickness and are vomiting frequently, try rinsing your mouth with a teaspoon of baking soda mixed with water instead of brushing your teeth after every time you vomit. When stomach acids frequently come into contact with teeth, it can eventually cause tooth enamel to wear away.
- Drink plenty of water with fluoride.

For more information about taking care of your mouth and teeth, visit **MouthHealthy.org**, the ADA's website just for patients.



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Congratulations on your pregnancy!

Did you know the benefits of good dental health begin well before your baby is born? Your child's teeth begin developing between the third and sixth months of pregnancy. You can get an early start on your child's dental health by taking good care of your own mouth now. When a mom's mouth is healthy, her baby's mouth will be too.

Brushing for Two: Keep Your Mouth Healthy During Pregnancy

Everyone knows that brushing your teeth is important for a healthy mouth. But did you know you should be brushing your teeth for at least two minutes twice a day, every day with fluoride toothpaste and flossing once a day? This one-two punch is especially important since you're now brushing for two. You may also want to rinse every night with a mouthrinse that contains fluoride.

For some women, changing hormone levels from pregnancy may result in increased plaque, a sticky film on your teeth that contains bacteria. This can lead to pregnancy gingivitis, a condition that causes gums to be sore and bleed easily. When gingivitis is left untreated it can lead to periodontitis, a more serious form of gum disease.

You can prevent tooth decay and gingivitis by keeping your teeth clean, especially around the gum line. Your dentist may also recommend a professional cleaning between your fourth and seventh months of pregnancy to help control gingivitis.



Healthy Smiles from the Start

Dental Care Tips for Mom and Baby



Your Baby's Here: Keep that precious smile healthy

A baby's 20 primary (baby) teeth are already present in the jaw at birth and usually begin coming through the gums around 6 months of age. Most children have a full set of 20 primary teeth by the time they are 3 years old.

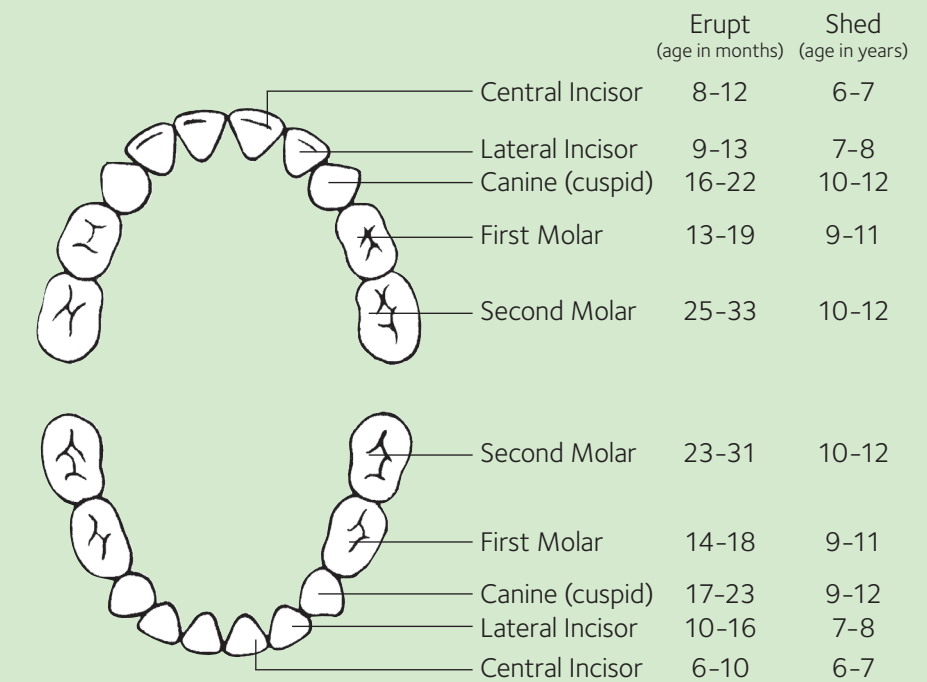
Baby teeth are important because they keep space in your child's jaw for adult teeth. When a baby tooth is lost too early, the permanent teeth can drift into the empty space and make it difficult for other adult teeth to find room when they come in. This can make teeth crooked or crowded.

Tips to Prevent Baby Bottle Tooth Decay

Tooth decay is the most frequent childhood disease, but it's also the most preventable. Tooth decay in infants and toddlers is often referred to as baby bottle tooth decay. The most common cause of tooth decay in babies is frequent, prolonged exposure of the baby's teeth to drinks that contain sugar. Here are some tips to avoid baby bottle tooth decay:

- Put only plain water, formula, milk or breast milk in bottles. Avoid filling bottles with liquids such as sweetened water, fruit juice or soft drinks.
- Babies should finish their bottles before going to bed. Never put your baby to bed with a bottle. Even breast milk or formula can still decay teeth.
- If your child uses a pacifier, provide one that is clean — don't dip it in sugar or honey.
- Try not to share saliva with the baby by using the same spoon or licking a pacifier to clean it. Tooth decay can begin with cavity-causing bacteria being passed from the mother to the baby.
- After each feeding, wipe your child's gums with a clean, damp gauze pad or washcloth.

Primary Teeth — Eruption Chart



Teething

A baby's front four teeth usually erupt or push through the gums at around four to six months of age, although some children don't have their first tooth until 12 or 14 months. As their teeth erupt, some babies may become fussy, sleepless and irritable, lose their appetite or drool more than usual. Your child may have sore or tender gums when teeth begin to erupt. Gently rubbing their gums with a clean finger or a moist gauze pad can be soothing. Your dentist or pediatrician may recommend a pacifier or teething ring. The Food and Drug Administration does not recommend benzocaine products — an over-the-counter anesthetic — for children younger than 2, except under the supervision of your dentist or pediatrician.



Tips to Clean Your Baby's Teeth

Begin cleaning your baby's mouth during the first few days by wiping the gums with a clean, moist gauze pad or washcloth.



For children under 3



For children age 3 to 6

- When your child's teeth begin to come in until age 3, brush the teeth gently twice a day with a child-size toothbrush and a very small amount of fluoride toothpaste around the size of a grain of rice.
- For children 3 to 6-years-old, brush their teeth twice a day with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste. Be sure they spit out the toothpaste.
- Until you're comfortable that your child can brush on his or her own, continue to brush your child's teeth twice a day with a child-size toothbrush and a small amount of fluoride toothpaste. When your child has two teeth that touch, you should begin flossing their teeth daily.

Thumbsucking and Pacifiers

Sucking is a natural reflex for children. Sucking on thumbs, fingers, pacifiers or other objects helps babies feel secure and happy. However, after a child's permanent teeth come in, sucking may cause problems with the proper growth of the mouth and tooth alignment and can also cause changes in the roof of the mouth. Pacifiers can affect the teeth essentially the same ways as sucking fingers and thumbs, but it is often an easier habit to break. Children usually stop sucking between the ages of two and four years old, or by the time the permanent front teeth are ready to come in. If you notice changes in your child's primary teeth or are concerned about your child's thumbsucking, consult your dentist.

Baby's First Trip to the Dentist

When your child's first tooth appears, it's time to schedule a dental visit.

Don't wait for them to start school or until there's a dental emergency to get them used to visiting the dentist. During the first dental visit, you can expect the dentist to:

- Inspect for oral injuries, cavities or other problems.
- Let you know if your child is at risk of developing tooth decay.
- Clean your child's teeth and provide tips for daily care.
- Discuss teething, pacifier use and thumbsucking habits.

Getting into a routine early will put your baby on the right path to a healthy smile from the start.



First Dental Visit

The ADA recommends that the first dental visit take place within six months after the first tooth appears, but no later than a child's first birthday.