

How do I protect my teeth during pregnancy? - Smile Solutions

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How do I protect my teeth during pregnancy? Being pregnant is incredibly exciting but it can also be a very nervous time for a new mum. And it's a time when you need to pay particular attention to protecting your teeth, especially your gums. There are plenty of guidelines as to what pregnant women should and shouldn't do, and these can be overwhelming. As far as oral health is concerned, two questions often asked are: "How do I protect my teeth during pregnancy?" and "Is dental surgery safe during pregnancy?". A woman's hormone levels rise during pregnancy, which can cause her gums to swell and bleed more than usual. This is one reason why it is very important to see a dentist and hygienist while you are pregnant. In addition, preventive dental work such as teeth cleaning is essential to avoid oral infections and gum disease – both of which have been linked to preterm birth. And dental surgery such as cavity fillings should be carried out to reduce the chance of infection. In a nutshell, we recommend you do the following to maintain your oral health and hygiene and protect your teeth while pregnant: Keep your teeth and gums clean, which means brushing twice daily for a minimum of 2 minutes and flossing once daily. Be gentle with your teeth and gums and always use a soft-bristled toothbrush, a gentle brushing technique and a fluoride toothpaste. If you have extreme gum sensitivity, try using a sensitive toothpaste or talk with your dentist about what you can use. Eat a balanced diet and try to cut down on sweets and candy. Try to make healthy snack choices such as fruit, veggie sticks or nuts. Have preventive exams and cleanings during your pregnancy. Postpone non-emergency dental work until the second trimester or after delivery if possible. Elective procedures should be postponed until after the delivery. Don't put off dental work until after delivery as decaying teeth, gingivitis or periodontal disease might cause infection that could harm your baby. Always tell your dentist when you are pregnant and how far along you are.

Pregnancy Gingivitis The risk of gum conditions increases during pregnancy. One such problem is pregnancy gingivitis, which is related to the higher levels of the hormone progesterone that are produced in the pregnant patient. These in turn increase the blood supply to the gums, causing them to bleed more easily. If you are suffering from pregnancy gingivitis, it is very important to visit a dental hygienist. The hygienist will remove all tartar from your teeth – tartar being a calcified deposit that forms on the teeth and can contribute to bleeding as well as decay. At the same time the hygienist will review your oral hygiene to ensure that you are doing your best to protect your teeth from plaque (the sticky residue left on your teeth after eating certain foods), which traps bacteria and can therefore be a significant contributor to gingivitis and decay

in all of us. As a pregnant woman, you may require more frequent hygiene visits throughout your pregnancy if your gums are particularly tender. Pregnancy Sickness & Dental Health If you are suffering from pregnancy sickness, otherwise known as morning sickness, the increase in acidity levels in your mouth can also be a problem for your teeth. Stomach acidity can corrode the surface of your teeth, so it is not a good idea to brush your teeth straight after vomiting. Instead rinse your mouth out with water and perhaps apply some fluoridated toothpaste to your teeth with your fingertip to protect and strengthen them. Pregnancy Epulis Occasionally women might develop a red, localised swelling on the gum during pregnancy; this is called a pregnancy epulis. Although this benign swelling will usually go away after pregnancy, it should be assessed by your dentist and in some cases may need to be removed. Finally... Enjoy this special time in your life. It is a precious journey in which you will want to stay healthy and keep your baby healthy. So look after yourself and protect your teeth and gums, and have a dental check up and clean when pregnant. I hope you find this information helpful, and good luck with your pregnancy and the birth!

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