



Why dental health matters during your pregnancy

Oral health can be impacted during pregnancy. Checking in with your dentist, provider, or community health worker about good dental hygiene can prevent any issues or catch them when they are treatable.

How common changes in pregnancy can affect oral health:

- ▶ Hormone changes can cause swelling in gums (gingivitis)
- ▶ Vomiting during morning sickness can cause damage to the protective coating of your teeth
- ▶ Greater sugar intake can lead to cavities
- ▶ Brushing your teeth can be unpleasant with a stronger gag reflex

Advocacy and prevention: Many Native families and communities face long waits or no access to a dental provider at all. Even with these challenges, there are steps you can take to protect your dental health during pregnancy.

- ✓ **Practice** regularly brushing twice per day and flossing daily.
- ✓ If you vomit, **rinse** your mouth.
- ✓ **Drink water** often, especially after meals.
- ✓ Try to have foods and drinks that are **low in sugar**.
- ✓ **Keep taking** your prenatal vitamins. Check with your primary care provider about extra calcium or vitamin D to support bone and teeth health.
- ✓ **Call** your dental clinic and let them know you're pregnant. They may have special appointments available.



Did you know?

During pregnancy, increased hormone levels can affect the way your body reacts to plaque that builds up on your teeth, causing redness, swelling, and even bleeding gums. This is commonly known as pregnancy gingivitis.

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Professional dental care should be put on hold during pregnancy.

- ▶ It's **safe and important** to get oral healthcare when you are pregnant, which includes professional care and good at-home habits and routines.

FACT