What you should know

Keep your mouth healthy during pregnancy

When you’re pregnant, you’re eating for two — but you’re also brushing for two. When you take care of your teeth and gums, it makes a big difference for your baby, both before and after birth.

Your mouth needs extra care when you’re pregnant.

Being pregnant can be hard on your teeth and gums. If you have morning sickness, it can be difficult to brush and floss, and if you’re vomiting, the acid can harm your enamel. Eating more often can increase your risk of tooth decay, especially if you choose sugary snacks. And hormone changes can lead to an increased risk of gingivitis, a gum disease caused by plaque.

During pregnancy, it’s important to work hard to keep your mouth healthy. Gum disease can increase your risk for complications including diabetes and preeclampsia, a condition where toxins build up in the blood and cause high blood pressure and other symptoms.

Even after you give birth, the health of your mouth affects the health of your baby. If you have gum disease or tooth decay, germs from your mouth can be passed to your baby by kissing or sharing a spoon. Those germs can later cause decay in your baby’s teeth.

In brief:

- Hormone changes during pregnancy can increase your risk for gum disease
- If you have gum disease, you can pass decay-causing bacteria on to your baby
- Brush twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste, and floss at least once daily
- Dental work is safe any time during pregnancy
Dental care tips during pregnancy:

- Brush your teeth at least twice daily using a fluoride toothpaste
- Floss at least once a day
- Rinse daily with a fluoride mouthwash
- Choose healthy foods like fruits and vegetables, and avoid sugary or starchy snacks and soda
- Visit your dentist at least once during your pregnancy. He or she can clean your teeth and help you control any tooth decay or gum disease. A dental visit is safe any time during your pregnancy

By taking good care of your mouth while you’re pregnant, you’re giving your baby a great start on a lifetime of excellent oral health.