



# Dental Care During Pregnancy

**Pregnant women should pay attention to taking care of their teeth.**

During pregnancy, your body, including your teeth, goes through many changes. Your gums may turn red and swell because of the increase of hormones in your body. This is known as **pregnancy gingivitis**. If you don't brush and floss regularly, harmful plaque will build up around your teeth and gums, and you can get gum disease and tooth decay (cavities).



## Tips on Good Dental Care

- Brush after every meal and before bedtime.
- Use dental floss at least once a day to clean teeth and to remove plaque around the gums.
- If your gums hurt, don't stop brushing or flossing. You should see your dentist. Your dentist and dental hygienist can help you prevent gingivitis.
- Be careful about medications, including painkillers and antibiotics. Some medications are harmful to your unborn baby. If you take medication, take it only under your dentist or doctor's recommendations.
- Watch what you eat. Do not snack on sugary foods like cookies and candies. Brush your teeth after meals and snacks.
- See your doctor or dentist if you have any questions.

## **When to See the Dentist**

The best time to see a dentist is during the middle part of pregnancy (second trimester). This is the time when most pregnant women are comfortable enough to visit the dentist.

### **Months 1 to 3 (First Trimester)**

This is not a good time to get dental work such as exams, fillings, extractions, etc. You should see a dentist only for teeth cleanings and emergency cases. Regular dental treatment can wait until months 4 to 6.

### **Months 4 to 6 (Second Trimester)**

This is a good time to get dental work such as exams, fillings, extractions, gum care, root canal therapy, and dental x-rays. Pregnant women should wear a lead apron with a collar to protect the baby when x-rays are taken. Other dental work like crowns, bridges, and most surgery should be postponed until after the baby's birth.

### **Months 7 to 9 (Third Trimester)**

If you are not comfortable sitting in a dental chair for a long period of time, dental visits should be kept short or get dental work after the baby is born.