

# GOOD ORAL HEALTH FOR TWO

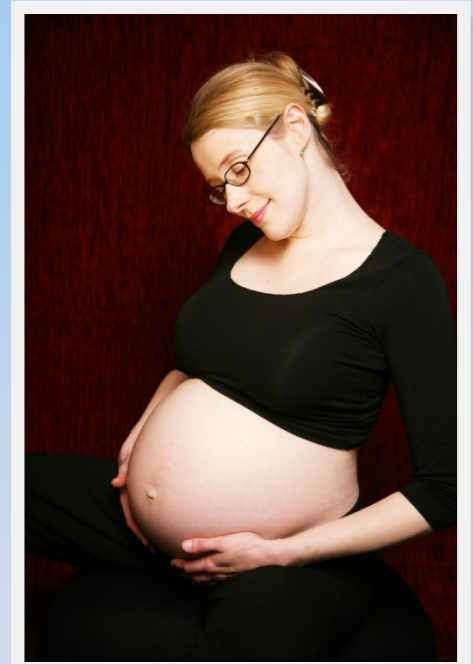


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**ADA Foundation**<sup>®</sup>

# Why are a mother's teeth important to the health of her baby's teeth?

- Babies can catch a cavity!
- Babies are born without decay-causing germs.
- The germs that cause cavities are passed to the baby from parents and family members.



# Start Now

Taking care of your mouth while you are pregnant is important for you and your baby.

To keep you and your baby healthy:

- Brush
- Floss
- Eat healthy foods
- Regular dental checkups and treatment for yourself



# Did you know?

Cavities and gum disease are caused by germs. If you have **cavities** that aren't fixed, you can pass these germs to your baby after birth.

*If you are pregnant and have gum disease, you may be more likely to have a baby that is born too early or too small.*



# How cavities form



\* Plaque is the sticky, yellow stuff that forms on your teeth. Plaque is full of germs. To prevent cavities, brush off the plaque and the germs.

# Gingivitis

- Is a mild form of gum disease.
- Makes gums red, puffy, or sore.
- Occurs when germs in plaque are not cleaned off teeth everyday.



*Gingivitis*

*When you are pregnant, you can be more likely to get gingivitis!*



# Periodontitis

- Periodontitis is a more severe form of gum disease.
- Gums begin to separate from the teeth, and teeth can become loose.



*Healthy mouth*

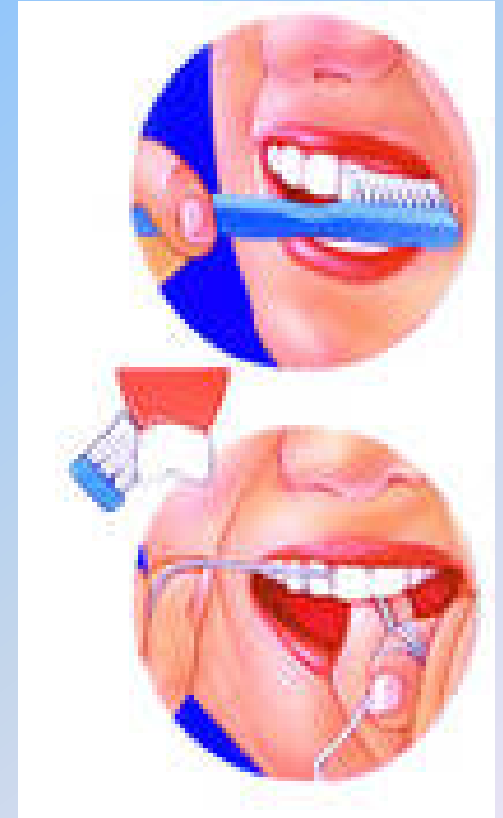


*Mild to moderate periodontitis*

*If you are pregnant and have **periodontitis**, you may be more likely to have a baby that is born too early or too small.*

# Brush and floss

- Brush and floss every day to remove plaque from your teeth.
- Removing plaque helps prevent gum disease and cavities!
- Brush your teeth with a soft toothbrush twice each day.
- Use a toothpaste with fluoride in it.
- Floss once a day before bedtime.





# What if you vomit or feel nauseas?



*If you are too nauseated to brush your teeth...*

- Rinse your mouth with water or a mouth rinse that has fluoride.

*If you vomit...*

- Rinse your mouth with water to remove the acid left on your teeth.

*After vomiting, wait 20 minutes before brushing your teeth!*

# Eat well

## Eat healthy foods:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Whole grain products like bread or crackers
- Dairy products like milk, yogurt or cheese
- Fish, chicken, eggs, beans and nuts



## Eat fewer sweets like:

- Candy
- Cookies
- Cake



# Drink well

Drink water at least a few times a day, especially between meals and snacks.

Drink water or low-fat milk.

Avoid:

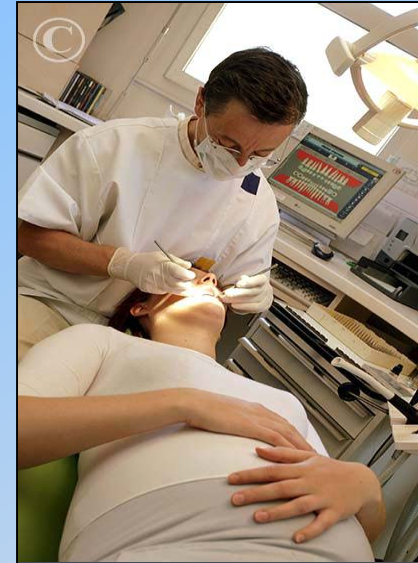
- Soda
- Juice
- Sweetened iced tea
- Fruit-flavored drinks



*The more often you drink sugary drinks,  
the more likely cavities will form!*

# Get dental care

- Visit a dentist for a check-up if you are pregnant or if you're planning a pregnancy!
- It is safe and recommended to have dental care when you are pregnant.



*Do not put it off until after you have the baby!*

# After your baby is born...

What are some things that you can do early in your baby's life so that they can have a healthy smile?



# At nap time or bedtime

You can put your baby to sleep with a bottle but:

- Put **ONLY WATER** in the bottle; and
- **NEVER** put breast milk, formula, milk, juice, or sugary drinks (like fruit-flavored drinks or soda) in the bottle during sleep time.





# Cleaning

- Clean your baby's gums after every feeding or at least twice a day even before the first teeth come in.
- Use a clean, damp washcloth.



*When your baby gets her/his first tooth:*

- Begin brushing his teeth twice a day.
- Use only a small smear of toothpaste.
- Use a toothpaste with fluoride in it.
- You should brush your baby's teeth until the age of 8.

# Don't share

You can pass germs **that cause tooth decay** from your mouth to your baby's mouth.



- Do not put your baby's spoon in your mouth. Use a clean spoon to taste your baby's food.
- Clean your baby's pacifier with water. *Do not use your mouth to clean it.*
- Do not share toothbrushes!
- Babies, children and grown-ups should have their own toothbrush!

# Lift your baby's lip

*Every month:*

- Check for white spots on your baby's teeth at the gum line.
- White spots can be the beginnings of cavities. If you see white spots, bring your baby to the dentist.



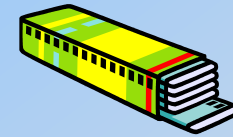
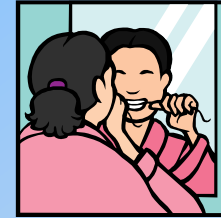
# Dental care for your baby

Take your baby to the dentist by the time he/she is one year old to have their teeth and gums checked.



# Mothers - continue good oral health habits!

- Keep flossing and brushing with fluoride toothpaste!
- Chew Xylitol gum (Ice Cubes, Spry)
- Continue to eat healthy foods.
- Dental check-up at least once a year.
- When your mouth is healthy, your baby is more likely to have a healthy mouth too!



## Resources

Adapted from;

Massachusetts Dental Society Foundation and the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, Lawrence, Massachusetts.

Adapted with permission from Holt K, Clark M, Barzel R. 2009. Two Healthy Smiles: Tips to Keep You and Your Baby Healthy (rev.). Washington, DC: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center and from the Illinois Department of Public Health.

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Northeast Center for Healthy Communities,  
Greater Lawrence Family Health Center,  
Lawrence, Massachusetts

<http://nc4hc.org/>

## Further Reading

“Mommy it hurts to chew” 2006  
Center for Oral Health  
[www.centerfororalhealth.org](http://www.centerfororalhealth.org)

Improving Access to Oral Health Care for Vulnerable and Underserved Populations 2011  
Institute of Medicine and National Research Council  
[www.nap.edu](http://www.nap.edu)

