



YOUR ORAL HEALTH & PREGNANCY



Be prepared for possible changes to your oral health

BEFORE PREGNANCY

During pregnancy it is important to maintain good oral hygiene and dental care practice to reduce the risk of dental problems. Your at home oral hygiene regime should include brushing twice daily with fluoridated toothpaste and cleaning in between your teeth, with products such as dental floss, interdental brushes or dental toothpicks as recommended by your oral health professional (OHP). When planning your pregnancy you should aim to visit your OHP early on to ensure any treatment needed can be planned and any advice can be shared.

DURING PREGNANCY

Dental Visits: It is advisable to inform your OHP if you are pregnant during your regular visits, as it may change the way in which we manage your dental appointment (for example - chair positioning, low tolerance to tastes & smells and keeping X rays to a minimum during this time). If you have any concerns whilst you are pregnant or breastfeeding you should discuss them with your OHP.

Oral Hygiene Care at Home: We always recommend using a soft toothbrush with fluoridated toothpaste and some form of interdental cleaning (e.g. flossing). On occasions you may find it difficult to tolerate brushing, as it may result in a gag response. Your OHP may suggest an electric or child size toothbrush with a smaller head, and/or reduce the quantity of toothpaste. Due to possible altered taste and smell, it may become difficult to tolerate your regular toothpaste, in which case it may be advisable to try another brand or flavour. Alternatively an alcohol free mouth rinse may be used. Consult with your OHP on what product will best suit your needs.

ORAL HEALTH CONCERNS & PREGNANCY

Pregnancy Gingivitis: develops as a result of hormonal changes during pregnancy. If left untreated, it can lead to forms of gum disease. Inflammation of the gum resulting in swelling, overgrowth & spontaneous and increased bleeding of the gums.

Periodontal disease (Jaw Bone Disease):

Chronic gingivitis leading to irreversible loss of soft tissue and jaw bone, which could result in gum recession, tooth mobility, long term tooth loss and/or may increase risk of premature birth or low birth weight. To reduce the risk of gum disease developing, maintain a diligent oral hygiene care regime at home.

Dental Erosion: Related to morning sickness or reflux during pregnancy where acids from the stomach causes irreversible damage to the enamel of the teeth. To reduce the risk of dental erosion after an episode of sickness or reflux: Rinse with water or a bicarbonate mouth rinse immediately» Wait 60 minutes before brushing. After 30 minutes chew sugar-free gum. Use products as prescribed by your OHT (e.g. GC Tooth Mousse)

Decay: Caused by increased snacking, increased sugary foods or other cravings and/or dietary changes. To reduce your risk of decay limit snacking and avoid foods and drinks with high acidic or sugar content. Remember to rinse thoroughly with water after food and drink as well as practicing good daily oral hygiene habits at home.

Pregnancy diabetes: Or "gestational diabetes" is a form of diabetes that can develop during pregnancy. The condition improves after pregnancy in most cases. It is characterised by reduced insulin resistance and insulin secretion. Pregnancy diabetes increases the risk and severity of gum disease. Seek advice from your OHP if you develop pregnancy diabetes.