



Chapter One: Pregnancy

Congratulations on your pregnancy!

The hormone changes associated with pregnancy can often bring about symptoms that affect oral care. Good oral hygiene and routine dental care during pregnancy can help you manage these symptoms.

Morning Sickness

Acid reflux from morning sickness as well as heartburn can cause enamel erosion. Drinking fluoridated water after vomiting is recommended to provide tooth protection. Brushing right away can actually cause more harm, however lightly dabbing toothpaste on your teeth is suggested and waiting about an hour to use a baby soft bristled toothbrush is encouraged. As needed your dentist may recommend treatment for severe erosion or sensitivity. Cinnamon and mint flavored products may increase nausea so it is suggested to try the fruit flavored products that are often designed for children.

Pregnancy Gingivitis

Bleeding or swollen gums are common in pregnancy due to hormonal changes and immunodeficiency. Although enlarged, loose, and red gums can appear throughout the mouth, the front teeth are typically most visible. Pregnancy can often make us forgetful or rushed when it comes to oral care. However, for your health as well as that of your baby, it is important to maintain an oral care hygiene regimen to include brushing, flossing and rinsing at least twice daily. Your dentist may recommend more frequent visits and other home therapies.

Altered Taste

Changes in sense of taste as well as smell in pregnancy are common and thought to contribute to a balanced intake of nutrients for your baby's growth. Taste buds are generally positioned in a distinct pattern with sweet located at the front of the tongue, and moving backwards are salt, then sour and finally bitter taste buds. Stay hydrated with lemon infused water, listen to your body and be sure to discuss any major diet changes with your physician.



Home Care

A good oral hygiene regimen to include brushing, flossing and rinsing two to three times a day is fundamental to your overall health and that of your baby. Soft bristled toothbrushes are often more gentle on your teeth and gums. Gels are potentially less abrasive than pastes and even brushing without either is better than not at all. It's encouraged to have routine dental cleanings before, throughout and after your pregnancy. Discuss home care challenges with your dentist and hygienist to design a regimen to meet your needs.

The Mommy Check-Up

Dental X-rays. The American College of Radiology has deemed x-rays as safe during pregnancy. Be sure to alert your dentist of your pregnancy to discuss any concerns.

Teeth Whitening. Cosmetic procedures such as teeth bleaching are best to delay until after your baby is born. Gum sensitivity is one of the most common side effects.

Routine Care. Preventative and restorative dental care is important to decrease risk of infection and pain. It is recommended to have treatment during your second trimester.

Do's and Don'ts. Visit your dentist regularly and discuss all concerns regarding your oral care. Don't be afraid to inquire about how dental treatment may affect your pregnancy.

For more information on oral care for your family, visit brightwhitesbydrwhite.com.