



ORAL HEALTH & PREGNANCY

New research has documented a strong association between mothers with periodontal disease and pre-term low birth weight births. In fact, we now know that expectant mothers who have untreated periodontal disease prior to delivery are at greater risk for having a low birth weight baby than those with healthy teeth. Dental treatment during pregnancy is usually very safe.

The Facts About Oral Health & Pregnancy

- Expectant mothers who have untreated periodontal disease are seven times more likely to deliver low birth weight infants than mothers with healthy mouths.
- An expectant mother with periodontal disease who receives treatment significantly reduces her risk of having an underweight baby.
- A thorough cleaning in the second trimester can significantly lower the risk of pre-term low birth weight.

Partners for Healthy Babies recommends the following for expecting mothers:

- Get a dental checkup before becoming pregnant to ensure no periodontal disease is present.
- If periodontal disease is present before pregnancy, get full treatment before becoming pregnant.
- Brush at least twice a day with a fluoridated toothpaste.
- Floss once a day.
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.

The warning signs of periodontal disease include:

- Bleeding or swollen gums
- Bad breath that doesn't go away with regular brushing or flossing
- Pain associated with any tooth
- Loose teeth, teeth that have shifted position or appear longer than normal

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