

Preventive Dental Visits for pregnant women are important!

Good oral health helps us eat, speak, smile, and express feelings.

Access to Preventive Dental Visits

Access to preventive oral health services is essential for pregnant women to have the best possible oral health and overall health.¹

It is important for women and health professionals to know that oral health services are safe and are an important component of a healthy pregnancy.²



Less than half of pregnant women have a teeth cleaning during pregnancy, a service that promotes good oral health.³

46%

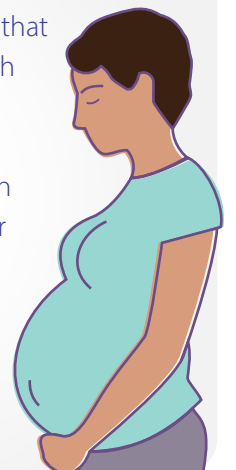
Pregnant women who had teeth cleaned

54%

Pregnant women who did not have teeth cleaned

Lack of perceived need and financial barriers are the primary reasons that women do not access oral health services during pregnancy.⁴

In many states, pregnant women with low incomes are eligible for Medicaid dental coverage and have access to oral health care that they don't have during other periods of their lives.⁵



Benefits of Preventive Dental Visits

During pregnancy, women's bodies change in many ways, and some of these changes can cause oral health problems.² For example, pregnant women's gums may swell and bleed (pregnancy gingivitis) more frequently than nonpregnant women's. If untreated, the condition may progress to periodontitis (gum disease).

Pregnancy is a teachable moment when women are motivated to adopt healthy behaviors.⁶



Oral health services, including counseling about good oral health behaviors, can improve maternal oral health and may reduce the transmission of cavity-causing bacteria from mothers to young children, which can delay or prevent tooth decay in children.²

References

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