

Pregnancy

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Dental X-rays

The American Dental Association and the American Academy of Family Physicians have confirmed that dental X-rays are safe during pregnancy. According to the American College of Radiology, no single diagnostic x-ray has a radiation dose significant enough to cause adverse effects in a developing embryo or fetus. The restricted location of the x-ray beam and the speed of modern x-rays minimize exposure risk. Also, lead aprons and thyroid collars are not necessary.

Morning Sickness

Hormonal fluctuations of progesterone and estrogen during pregnancy often cause hyperemesis or severe nausea. Vomit and acid reflux create an acidic environment in the mouth. This acid softens teeth and can lead to dental erosion. Expecting mothers are discouraged from brushing their teeth immediately after vomiting. Instead rinse with water or a fluoridated mouthwash and wait 30 minutes to brush.

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Pregnancy Gingivitis

The surge of progesterone during pregnancy can cause gingival inflammation, bleeding, and pain. Good oral hygiene consisting of brushing with soft bristles, flossing in between the teeth and along the gum line, and mouth rinsing with an antimicrobial is recommended along with routine dental cleanings. If left untreated, gingivitis can lead to periodontitis, a more serious gum disease that can cause tooth loss.

Stress and Fatigue

Pregnancy is an exhausting time for mothers. Stress can lead to excessive teeth clenching and grinding, which can damage tooth structure and dental work. It can also cause discomfort of our temporal mandibular joint and facial muscles. Nigtguards and relaxation exercises are encouraged. Also, oral hygiene before naps and bedtime are important to minimize cavity risk.

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Teeth Whitening

Hydrogen peroxide is the main ingredient in most teeth whitening products. It's used in professional in-office treatments and over-the-counter teeth whitening products. Due to the potential safety concerns regarding bleaching materials, pregnant and nursing women should delay teeth whitening procedures. Natural teeth whiteners are suggested, instead. Such as pineapple, which contains the enzyme bromelain that removes plaque and brightens teeth.