

Good oral health  
during pregnancy  
is important to your  
baby's health, too.



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## Here's why you should have your teeth and gums checked during pregnancy.

Maintaining healthy teeth and gums during pregnancy is important to help keep your unborn baby healthy. In fact, periodontal disease during pregnancy may be associated with low-birth weight and premature births. Various studies indicate that pregnant women who have periodontal disease are 3.5 to 7 times more likely to deliver pre-term, low-birth weight babies.

Pre-term babies may develop slowly and experience serious health problems, including cerebral palsy, epilepsy, chronic lung disease, learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder.

It means that along with having proper medical care during pregnancy, it is important for mothers-to-be to visit their dentist early in their pregnancy, too.

### The connection between teeth and baby

The primary cause of periodontal disease is a bacteria called *P. gingivalis*. And while periodontal disease may be considered a disease of the gums, research shows it can travel (via the blood stream) to affect other areas of the body as well – including the uterus. There it can trigger chemicals and hormones that may induce premature labor in women during pregnancy resulting in low-birth weights.

Recent studies indicate that periodontal treatment may significantly reduce the risk for low-weight, pre-term babies. Maintaining your oral health during pregnancy is one way that may improve your overall health and lower costs.



### Visit your dental provider

During pregnancy, it is important that you pay extra attention to your oral health along with your overall health. Along with being more susceptible to periodontal disease, any pre-existing periodontal disease can become more severe.

That's why you should visit your dental provider, and plan more frequent visits during pregnancy for exams and cleaning. You should also pay even more attention to daily oral care, including brushing and flossing.

Should any bleeding or gum swelling occur at any time, see your dentist or dental hygienist immediately.

### Signs of periodontal disease

The most common symptoms of periodontal disease include the following:

- Bleeding gums during brushing
- Red, swollen or tender gums
- Gums that have pulled away from teeth
- Persistent bad breath
- Pus between teeth and gums
- Loose or separating teeth
- A change in the way your teeth fit together when you bite
- A change in the fit of partial dentures.

For more oral health tips for you and your baby, visit [www.deltadentalia.com](http://www.deltadentalia.com)