



# *The Importance of Oral Health During Pregnancy*

Did you know that nearly 20 percent of small babies born too early have

## **Moms with Gum Problems?**

A baby born too early may be small and have many health problems. You can help your baby to be born healthy and at the right time by taking care of your mouth.

### **Changes During Pregnancy:**

Your hormones will change while you are pregnant. This change can cause you to have a bigger reaction to the germs that live in your mouth. Your gums can become red, swollen, tender and bleed easily.

Gum problems (pregnancy gingivitis) can start the second month of your pregnancy and become very severe by the eighth month.



### **How does this affect your baby?**

Certain bacteria in your mouth that cause gum problems can affect your health. If your health isn't good, you might start early labor. Early labor can cause babies to be born too soon. Your baby could have health problems if born too early.

### **For your baby's sake, take care of your teeth!**

Taking care of yourself while you are pregnant helps you to have a healthy baby. Follow these four steps to prevent gum problems:

1. Brush and floss your teeth every day
2. Get your teeth cleaned while you are pregnant.
3. Call your dental hygienist or dentist if your gums bleed or are swollen.
4. Eat Healthy foods.

**Turn over to see more of what you can do.**

## What Can you do?

Germs grow in your mouth all the time. You can help your baby be born at the right time by taking care of your mouth every day.

- Brush and floss your teeth every day to clean off the bacteria.
- Have your teeth cleaned while you are pregnant.
- Call your dental hygienist or dentist if your gums get tender, swollen or bleed for more than a few days while you are pregnant.
- Eat foods like milk, yogurt, broccoli and oranges. These foods have vitamins to help your teeth and gums be healthy.
- Eat carrot sticks and cheese for snacks. If you eat foods with sugar, eat them at mealtime.



For more information, contact the:  
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