

# HEALTHY TEETH + PREGNANT MOMS = HEALTHY BABIES

Mothers with healthy teeth are less likely to have problems with their pregnancies. Gum infection (gingivitis) during pregnancy may cause early labor or low-birthweight babies.

Healthy teeth are important for Mom and Baby after the child is born. Bacteria pass from Mom's mouth to Baby's mouth when foods or spoons are shared or if Mom uses her mouth to clean a pacifier. This can lead to cavities in Baby.

Cavities or tooth decay is really an infection of the teeth. Cavities can be painful, and Baby may not want to eat or drink. Moms and babies can reduce chances for tooth infections and gum disease by following the steps below.



## Protect Mom

### Keep Teeth Clean:

- ☞ Brush teeth twice a day.
- ☞ Floss teeth once a day.
- ☞ See a dentist during the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester or sooner.
- ☞ Eat a balance diet that is low in sugar to help prevent tooth decay.



## Guard Baby

### Keep Childhood Mouths Healthy:

- ☞ Wipe gums with a damp clean cloth.
- ☞ Use a small soft toothbrush to clean teeth.
- ☞ Have Baby see a dentist at 1 year of age.
- ☞ Put only breastmilk, formula or water in a bottle.
- ☞ Start offering a cup at 6 months; try to stop using a bottle by age 1 year.
- ☞ Don't put baby to bed with a bottle.
- ☞ Don't nurse baby all through the night.

### Food Tips for Healthier Teeth

- Eat low-sugar, high nutrient foods such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and low-fat milk/yogurt/cheese.
- Limit the number and time sugary snacks are eaten.
- Eat sugary foods with meals or serve them with juicy fruits/vegetables, water or cheese.
- Drink water with food and between meals.



Children's Dental Health  
Initiative of San Diego



County of San Diego  
HHSA



Calif Dept of Health Services  
& US Dept of Agriculture