

Dental care during pregnancy

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Should I visit my dentist during pregnancy?

You should see your dentist as you would normally. However, due to hormonal changes, some women's dental health may require closer attention during pregnancy. For example, your gums may bleed more easily. Your dentist will be able to answer any queries you have.

Is it safe to have dental treatment during pregnancy?

It is safe to have routine dental care. You should, however, advise your dentist that you are pregnant and tell him/her whether you are taking any medication.

The Department of Health recently advised that although there is no evidence that placement or removal of amalgam fillings during pregnancy affects the fetus, as a precautionary measure this should be avoided, where clinically reasonable, pending further research. If you are pregnant and need emergency treatment, however, the Department's advice is that the benefits of treatment with dental amalgam outweigh the hypothetical risk to the fetus. Non amalgam fillings or temporary materials can be used and the final treatment postponed. If you need extensive treatment during pregnancy, it is advisable to have this carried out after the baby is born.

Under the NHS dental treatment is free for all women during pregnancy and for the first 12 months of the baby's life.

Is it safe to have a dental x-ray during pregnancy?

Dental x-rays need not be avoided when treatment is necessary during pregnancy. As a general rule, however, medical and dental interventions are kept to a minimum during pregnancy as a precaution, and for this reason, routine x-rays that you would normally have at a check-up, are usually postponed until after the baby is born.

Can pregnancy cause damage to teeth?

It is not true that pregnancy results in calcium deficiency and dental decay.

Is diet important during pregnancy?

A balanced diet is important for your baby's development and can improve your general health and maintain oral health. It is also a pattern which should become a normal routine. Morning sickness may make you want to eat "little and often", but sugary foods and drinks should be avoided. It is important that at all times, you eat and drink sensibly.

When should my baby first visit the dentist?

British Dental Association Briefing

Dental care starts at birth. Regular check-ups will remove much of the anxiety children may have if they need treatment. Take your baby with you when you visit the dentist, as this can help the baby to become familiar with the practice. The baby's own check-ups can start at about 6 months, when the first teeth start to appear.

When should I start brushing my baby's teeth?

Cleaning the teeth should start when the first teeth start to erupt. A soft toothbrush with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste should be used. Tooth-brushing should be supervised by an adult up to the age of seven.