



Bite

Word of mouth

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Featured

Healthy teeth and a happy pregnancy

Congratulations—you're going to have a baby! This special time in your life calls for special attention to your health and well-being—and that includes your dental health.

Just as the condition of your teeth and gums affects much of your overall health, so too it affects your well-being during pregnancy. At Bite Dental, we're well-versed in the particular needs of the expectant mums we treat, so be sure to let us know as soon as you know the good news! In fact, if you are thinking about starting a family, we suggest you schedule a dental exam and cleaning *before* you become pregnant. This will give us time to identify and correct any problems that might otherwise get in the way of your happy pregnancy.

How does my oral health affect my baby?

You may be wondering why all this concern over teeth and gums, at a time when you just want to focus on bringing the new baby into the world. However, just as your dental health affects other aspects of your life, it can affect your baby, too. Studies have shown that pregnant women with periodontal (or gum) disease have a greater risk of giving birth to a premature,

low birth weight baby. If the gum disease worsens during pregnancy, the risk increases. The mechanism for this is not completely understood, but research suggests that the infected, inflamed gums spur the body into triggering labor.



Can pregnancy make my dental problems worse?

There are several ways in which pregnancy can influence your dental health—and one big way in which it won't! You've probably heard that being pregnant causes calcium loss to your teeth. Nope, not going to happen. Your diet is what provides the calcium needed for your baby's healthy development, not your teeth. However, if

your dietary calcium is inadequate, the needs of your baby are met by taking calcium from your bones. It's important to supply your meals with plenty of calcium-rich foods, or take a supplement if your doctor recommends it.

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This month...

With the recent new arrival to our family I thought it topical to discuss pregnancy and oral health. Dental treatment is considered safe for your unborn child however there are some restrictions such as the use of X-rays which can hinder a diagnosis and the use of medication to control pain if it occurs.

Premature birth and undiagnosed gum disease is a link that is gaining interest in the scientific literature.

My advice for those considering having a child is to have a full dental check beforehand. And while pregnant, maintain brushing and flossing habits and routine checks with your dentist.

Dr Simon Franks



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The urge to snack between meals is also common to many pregnant women. That is normal, but be aware that the carbs and sugars often found in snack food provide a nice meal for the decay-causing bacteria that live in your mouth. Instead of a cookie, why not reach for some fresh fruit and yogurt for your snack? You'll get plenty of vitamins, calcium, and



protein—all of which will help your baby develop in a healthful way, with strong teeth, too!

The elevated levels of progesterone that go with pregnancy seem to increase the way the gums react to the plaque that builds up on your teeth. This can result in a condition called pregnancy gingivitis, in which the gums become red and inflamed, and may even bleed. Pay special attention to keeping your teeth and gumline clean at this time. There's also a condition with the unappealing name of 'pregnancy tumors'. These lumps on the gums usually result from an overgrowth of gum tissue during the second trimester and often resolve after the baby

is born. It's believed that pregnancy tumors are another hormone-triggered reaction to plaque buildup. If you experience these lumps, please book to see us.

I need dental work, will it hurt my baby?

If possible schedule your check-ups and other dental work, during the 4th to 6th month of your pregnancy. Experience has shown this to be an ideal window—not so early that it might impact your baby's development, and not so late that you'll have to endure the discomfort of lengthy sitting in a dentist's chair! Sometimes there is no choice but to see your dentist to treat an emergency. The biggest concerns for dentistry during pregnancy are use of x-rays and pain medication. If we can avoid it we will, but with proper shielding using a leaded apron, your baby can be protected from the low-level radiation used in dental x-rays. Most important is that anti-inflammatories to relieve tooth ache such as neurofen or advil cant be taken at all

At Bite Dental, we'll provide you with instructions for home care during this special time, and we'll gladly answer any questions you may have.

Bite News

Welcome Matthew!

We excitedly welcome a new member to the Bite Family—Simon's son Matthew was born in January. Due to his size at 4.5kg, Simon is planning on starting Matthew's rugby training ASAP! Mum and bub are both well.



At Bite we prefer to see kids more often to PREVENT problems—that's why we cap the gap for kids.

Bite celebrates community & everyday heros. Let us know if you have a cause you'd like us to shout about.

Handy Hint

First visit to the dentist

The ADA recommends first dental examinations around 6 months of age or when the first teeth appear. But treatments at that stage are limited. Its more about discussing with parents good dietary habits and how to look after these new teeth for bub.

The best idea is to let baby lie in your lap while you get your exam or treatment—so they see and hear what we do and its not such an unfamiliar environment when its their turn in the chair. Over a few visits they think its a fun game and any treatment becomes easier.



BRING IN THE KIDS **CAP the GAP**

Remember, Bite Caps the Gap at \$20 out of pocket for all kids exams, x-rays & cleans

Visit the Bite Dental website to receive our email newsletter which includes regular health tips plus exclusive savings and offers from Bite Dental and our community.

Bitedental.com.au