

Featured

Expectant mothers' oral health vital to health of babies

Can oral bacteria in an expectant mother really affect her baby? Sadly, more research is coming forward that demonstrates a link between build-up of oral bacteria and problems in pregnancy—such as giving birth to a pre-term or low-birth weight baby. In Australia, about 8% of babies are born prematurely every year, at rate that is continuing to rise.

When a woman becomes pregnant, she knows it is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle to ensure both the health of herself and the health of her baby. New clinical recommendations from the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) and the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP) urge pregnant women to maintain periodontal (gum) health as well. Research has indicated that women with gum disease may be at risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as giving birth to a pre-term or

low-birth weight baby due to the presence of certain bacteria in the mouth when gums are inflamed.

Pre-term births have increased significantly during the last 20 years according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (AIHW).

The primary cause is intrauterine infections, which have previously been thought to result from bacteria entering the uterus through the genital area.

However, new studies are finding that bacteria typically found in the mouths of expectant mothers can enter the uterus as well. You see, when gums are irritated by bacteria-filled



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This month...

Mums-to-be need to be on top of their own health to ensure the best for their baby. Increasing evidence shows that your teeth should not be neglected during this important time. Don't miss our feature article to learn more.

Yellow vs white? Jenna gives you the secrets to keeping your teeth stain free.

Lastly, we share our latest successes with you—an update on our mission to help those with diabetes, as well as an overdue round up of what the Bite team has been up to.

Enjoy

Dr Simon Franks





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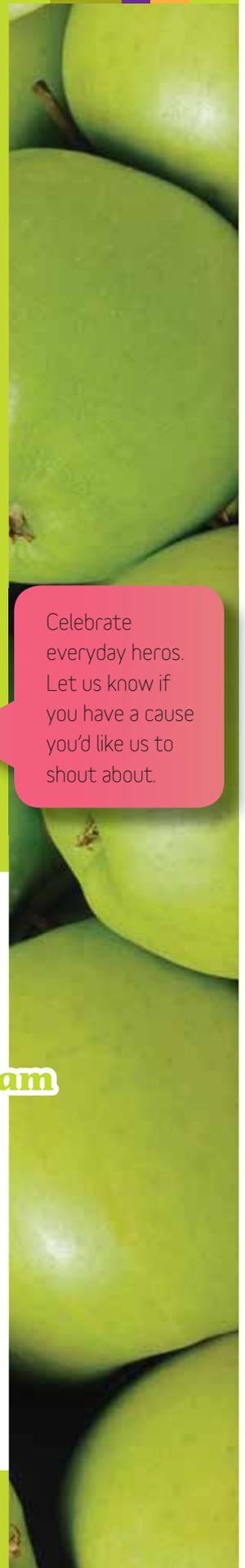
plaque they start to bleed. This bleeding opens up a pathway for oral bacteria to enter the bloodstream and then infect internal tissues like the heart, blood vessels and uterus. An infection like this of the uterus can then lead to late miscarriages and stillbirths, as well as pre-term births.

An article published in 2010 in the journal *Infection and Immunity* reported on studies carried out at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio, USA. By working with pregnant mice, researchers determined which of the 700 or so species of bacteria that live in the human mouth are capable of migrating to the uterus. Out of the diverse group of bacteria colonizing the mouse placentas, the majority originate in the oral cavity and are associated with problems in human pregnancy. According to the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, babies with a birth weight of less than 2.5 kilos may be at risk of long-term health problems such as delayed motor skills, social growth, or learning disabilities. Similar complications are true for babies born at least three weeks

earlier than its due date. Other issues associated with pre-term birth include respiratory problems, vision and hearing loss, or feeding and digestive problems.

This increasing evidence reinforces the need for pregnant women to practice excellent oral hygiene at home, as well as get recommended

professional check-ups and cleaning from a dentist and hygienist. Pregnant women are also more susceptible to gum disease due to the circulation of pregnancy hormones – which makes this situation a 2-way street! If you have any tendency towards gum disease, it's best to consult with your dentist and begin a treatment program as soon as you learn that you're pregnant—or better still, before you become pregnant. Because it's more than just your teeth... it's the long and healthy life for your bub!



Celebrate everyday heros. Let us know if you have a cause you'd like us to shout about.

Education

Diabetes education

This month Simon has been busy giving lectures to the diabetes educators and medical practice managers around Brisbane and Ipswich explaining the links between Diabetes and Gum Disease.

He spoke to a few hundred people at the Convention Centre last week which was the largest group we have done and by all accounts he didn't make too much of a fool of himself on stage.

Remember if you know someone with diabetes let them know that this can impact on their teeth and that at Bite Dental do a free risk assessment for diabetic patients in regards to this. Call the practice or jump on the website for more info.

News

Team update

Simon's first exam results for his Masters degree have come back—70% and 80% so we are off to a good start. Only 38 more to go...

Lyn-Maree and Stacey have started the process of practice accreditation which aims to ensure we provide the highest standards and a quality control system for the treatment of our patients. Should have this all done by the end of the year.

Jenna is back next week from her six weeks holiday—looking forward to hearing about her escapades.



Healthy Hygiene Hints

Keeping teeth stain free

Stains from tea, coffee, red wine, soy sauce and curries are a nuisance. So here are a few little tricks that can help keep those stains away.

- Chew gum in between meals;
- Drinks lots of water (especially after coffee & dark drinks);
- Include stain preventing foods—carrots, apples, celery and cauliflower;
- Use a whitening toothpaste—they don't really whiten but do contain particle that help to polish the surface;
- Drink through a straw;
- Don't smoke.

Jenna

