



Bite

Word of mouth

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Featured

Healthy mouth for a healthy bub

You may be wondering why all this concern over teeth and gums, at a time when you just want to focus on the 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. This special time in your life calls for special attention to your health and well-being—and that includes your dental health.

Up until only a couple of generations ago, there was a general perception that when a woman starts having children her teeth go bad. She would 'lose a tooth for every child'. To account for this, it was perfectly acceptable for many women for have their teeth removed pre-emptively and replaced with dentures shortly after she was married. It was thought that this would save a lifetime's worth of dental bills. Thankfully, we see things a little differently these days!



and care—and certainly does NOT justify removing a woman's teeth!

Pregnancy and your teeth

The first way that pregnancy can influence your oral

health is by giving you the munchies. The urge to snack between meals is common to many pregnant women—particularly on things that are sweet or sour. The carbs, sugars and acids often found in snack food provide a nice meal for the decay-causing bacteria that live in your mouth. Pregnancy cravings can also be very unusual snacks for the pregnant mother and therefore are usual for the mouth too.

Morning sickness and reflux is a significant factor that causes changes in the mouth. When stomach acids enter the mouth, it softens the enamel and

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This month...

It seems that something's in the air at Bite Dental for I don't think that we've ever seen so many expectant parents at the studio! In light of this exciting year for many of our patients, the topic this month is a rehash of the dental issues that are important to consider during pregnancy.

It's a busy month for us as well—with Easter, school holidays, Jenna doing the rounds with diabetes support groups, and I'm off the sit my exams in London.

We're also happy to welcome a new member to our team—Jess. So be sure to say hello when you are in next!

Dr Simon Franks



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overtime can result in permanent erosion of the tooth surface. Also, when the saliva is acidic for extended periods, it provides an environment that decay-causing bacteria love and so they multiply, resulting in more bad bacteria in the mouth. They then produce more acid themselves which causes decay in the teeth. This why we often see more decay lesions than usual during pregnancy.

Pregnancy and your gums

Gum disease during pregnancy is what really concerns gynaecologists because of its effect on the pregnancy itself. 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 due to bacterial action. This can result in a condition called pregnancy gingivitis, in which the gums become red and inflamed, and may even bleed. Research has found that gum disease in a pregnant woman can be linked to low birth weight and preterm birth. Gum disease is essentially a low grade infection that can travel through the body, triggering an immune response that limits the baby's development and may lead to premature delivery.

There's also a condition with the unappealing name of 'pregnancy tumors'. These lumps on the gums result from an overgrowth of gum tissue. They typically appear during the second trimester, and show up as red, raw growths that bleed easily. They usually resolve after the baby is born. It's believed that pregnancy tumors are another

hormone-triggered reaction to plaque that builds up between the teeth. If you experience these lumps, consult with your dentist.

Thus, it's important to continue to see your dentist while you're pregnant. Yet many women skip this important part of prenatal care. In a recent study, half of the expectant mothers surveyed reported that they put off getting dental care even when they were in pain in part because they erroneously believed the dental procedures would harm the baby. Sadly, these women may have been putting their babies at greater risk by delaying dental care.

Because healthy teeth and gums are so important to a successful pregnancy, the Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists recommends that pregnant women get an oral exam along with their first prenatal check-up, as well as continuing with needed dental care while expecting.

At Bite Dental, we're well-versed in the particular needs of the expectant moms 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.



Bite team

Travelling team

Jenna will be out and about in the community speaking with some local diabetes support groups in Ipswich and Brisbane.

We wish Simon the best of luck for his exam in London this month. It's going to be a quick turnaround for him over ten days so he'll be back in no time!

Introducing Jess

Jessica started as a dental assistant five years ago and hasn't looked back. She enjoys getting to know all of her patients and the variety of work that each day brings. She prides herself on making those around her feel comfortable and at ease. When she's not in the dental surgery you will find her at the beach with her 5 year old son.



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

Healthy Hygiene Hints

Baking soda's drawbacks

Be careful brushing with baking soda! Using baking soda and water to brush your teeth can be very effective at controlling stains and therefore make your teeth look whiter. However it is quite abrasive on the surface and can cause permanent damage to the enamel.

Baking soda does not kill bacteria either or have any therapeutic benefits for the teeth.

If this is something that you like to do then:

- do not brush too hard
- don't brush for longer than one minute,
- uses a soft toothbrush,
- only use baking soda once per month; and
- continue to use a fluoride toothpaste every day.

Jenna