



National Maternal & Child
Oral Health
RESOURCE CENTER

Oral Health: Why It's Important and What Healthy Start Communities Can Do to Improve It

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Healthy Start EPIC Center

April 7, 2015

3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET



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Overview

During this presentation, you will be learning about the following:



- Importance of oral health during pregnancy and infancy
- Reasons pregnant women do not seek or receive oral health care
- Oral health issues faced during pregnancy
- Strategies for improving and maintaining oral health during pregnancy and infancy

Importance of Oral Health During Pregnancy and Infancy

- Healthy mother
 - Oral health is important to mother's overall health and healthy pregnancy
- Healthy baby
 - Bacteria that cause tooth decay can be passed from mother to baby
 - Not enough evidence to support theory that gum disease causes premature births and/or low-birthweight babies

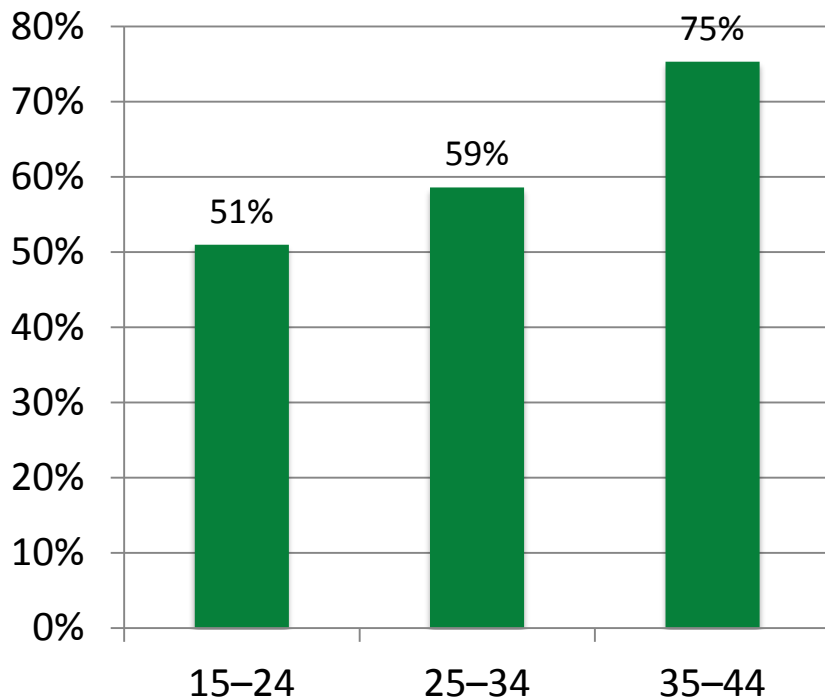
Pregnant Women and Oral Health

4 out of 10 pregnant women have tooth decay and/or some form of gum disease

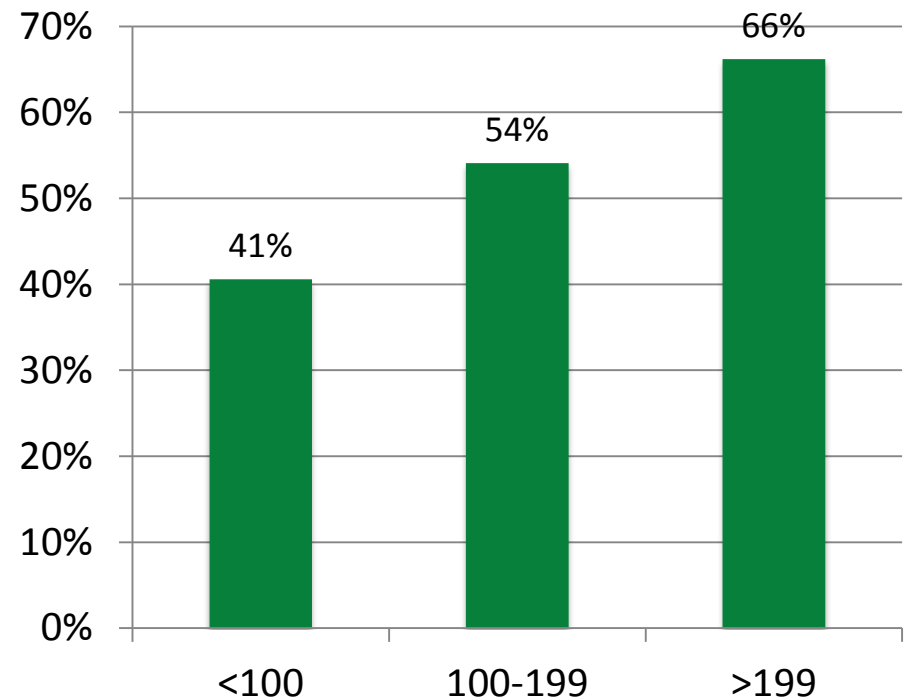


Percent of Pregnant Women Having a Dental Appointment in Previous Year

By Age



By Income

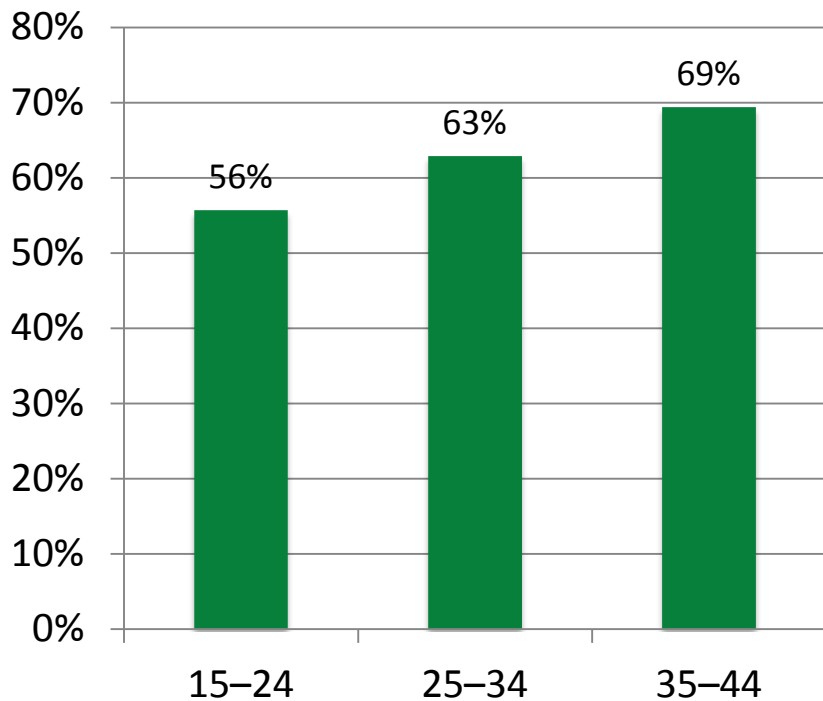


Percent of Poverty Level

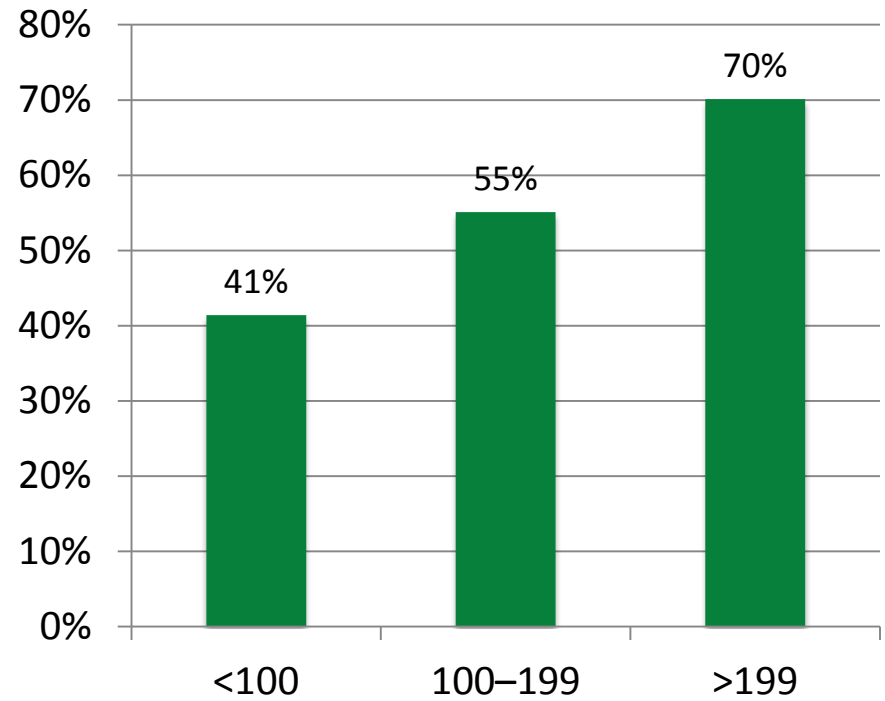
Source: Azofeifa A, Yeung LF, Alverson CJ, Beltran-Agular E. 2014. Oral health conditions and dental visits among pregnant women and nonpregnant women of childbearing age in the United States, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1999–2004. *Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy*. 11(E163):1–10.

Percent of Pregnant Women Having Preventive Care as Main Reason for Dental Visit

By Age



By Income



Percent of Poverty Level

Source: Azofeifa A, Yeung LF, Alverson CJ, Beltran-Agular E. 2014. Oral health conditions and dental visits among pregnant women and nonpregnant women of childbearing age in the United States, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1999-2004. *Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy*. 11(E163):1-10.

Reasons for Not Seeking or Receiving Oral Health Care During Pregnancy



- Do not understand that oral health is important to a healthy pregnancy
- Believe that poor oral health during pregnancy is normal
- Afraid that baby may be hurt by x-rays, local anesthesia, pain medications, or dental treatment
- Cannot find a dentist willing to treat pregnant women

Common Oral Health Issues During Pregnancy

Healthy mouth



Periodontitis



Moderate

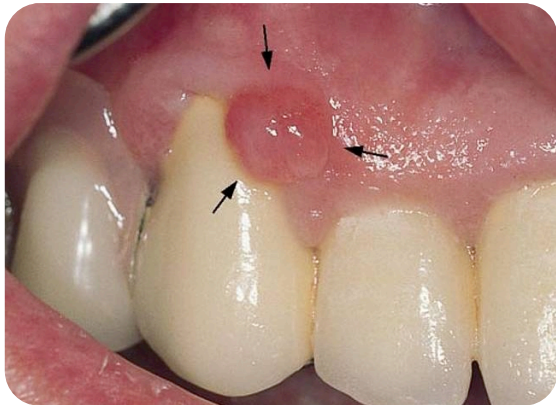
Pregnancy gingivitis



Severe

Other Possible Oral Health Issues During Pregnancy

Pregnancy tumor



Tooth erosion



Dry mouth



Other Possible Oral Health Issues During Pregnancy

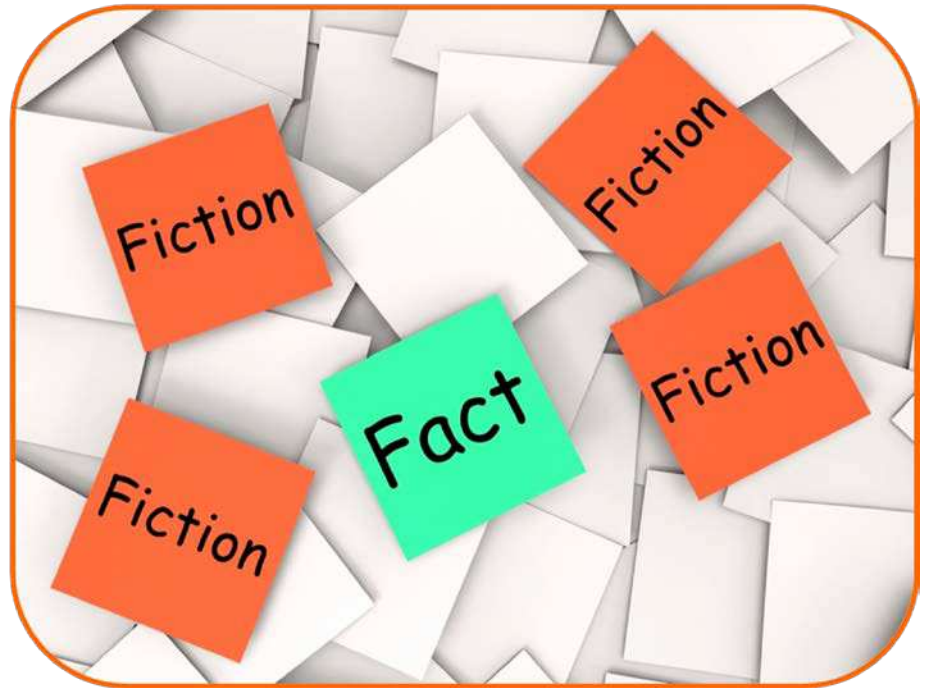


Oral Health Effects of Iron Deficiency Anemia

- Burning sensation in the mouth and tongue
- Fungal infections in the mouth
- Tongue redness and swelling
- Sores and pale tissue in the mouth

Fact or Fiction

- Lose a tooth for every pregnancy
- Baby takes calcium from mother's bones and teeth
- Others?



Oral Health Messages to Share with Pregnant Women



- Get oral health care
- Practice good oral hygiene
- Eat healthy and nutritious food
- Practice other healthy behaviors

Get Oral Health Care

- Receiving oral health care during pregnancy is safe, including:
 - X-rays
 - Pain medication (e.g. aspirin)
 - Local anesthesia (e.g. Novocain)
- Let dental office know you're pregnant and when you are due
- Get needed oral health care before baby is born

Practice Good Oral Hygiene

- Drink fluoridated water throughout the day
- Brush teeth using fluoridated toothpaste twice a day
- Floss teeth once a day

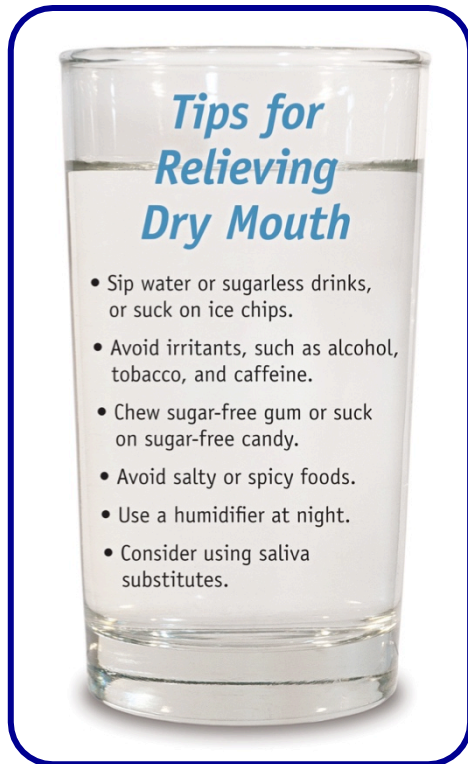


Practice Good Oral Hygiene

- Rinse nightly with an over-the-counter, alcohol-free, fluoride mouth rinse
- After eating, chew gum with Xylitol to reduce the amount of bacteria that cause tooth decay
- After vomiting, rinse mouth with a teaspoon of baking soda in a cup of water to neutralize stomach acids in mouth

Practice Good Oral Hygiene

Dry Mouth:



- Sip on water or suck on ice chips
- Avoid alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine
- Chew sugar-free gum or suck on sugar-free mints
- Avoid salty or spicy foods
- Use a humidifier at night
- Consider using over-the-counter saliva substitutes
- Talk to dentist or dental hygienist

Eat Healthy and Nutritious Meals

- Eat a variety of healthy foods
- Eat fewer foods high in sugar like candy, cookies, cake, and dried fruit
 - Read labels to identify foods high in sugar
- Drink fewer beverages that contain sugar, like fruit-flavored drinks or pop/soda
- Drink water throughout the day, especially between meals and snacks



Practice Other Healthy Behaviors

- Attend prenatal classes
- Stop tobacco and recreational drug use
- Avoid secondhand smoke
- Stop alcohol use



Strategies to Help Pregnant Women Achieve and Maintain Good Oral Health



Education Strategies:

- Include oral health in prenatal and perinatal home visits
- Host oral health baby showers
- Arrange “Ask a Dentist/Dental Hygienist” events for pregnant women
- Use informational interviewing strategies to educate and motivate pregnant women

Strategies to Help Pregnant Women Achieve and Maintain Good Oral Health

Case Management Strategies:

- Identify local oral health providers willing to see pregnant women and make referrals
- Help pregnant women overcome emotional and physical barriers to receiving oral health care



Strategies to Help Pregnant Women Achieve and Maintain Good Oral Health



Partnership/Collaboration Strategies:

- Partner with local WIC agencies
- Partner with local dental societies
- Partner with local obstetrics and gynecology societies
- Collaborate with perinatal programs

Resources for Healthy Start Staff

- *Bright Futures in Practice: Oral Health—Pocket Guide (2nd ed.)*
- *Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: A National Consensus Statement*
- Module 5: Oral Health and the Pregnant Patient in *Smiles for Life: A National Oral Health Curriculum*
- *Open Wide: Oral Health Training for Health Professionals*



Resources for Pregnant Women English and Spanish

- *Two Healthy Smiles: Tips to Keep You and Your Baby Healthy*
- *A Healthy Smile for Your Baby: Tips to Keep You and Your Baby Healthy*
- *A Healthy Smile for Your Young Child: Tips to Keep Your Child Healthy*
- *Tips for Good Oral Health During Pregnancy*



Questions?



Contact Information

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Wrap Up and Reminders

- Upcoming Webinars:
 - **Care Coordination & the Healthy Start Community**
on April 14 from 3:00 – 4:30 PM EST
 - **Using Doulas As a Resource for Case Management**
on April 21 from 3:00 – 4:00 PM EST
 - **Reproductive Life Planning**
on April 28 from 3:00 – 4:00 PM EST
 - **Centering Pregnancy and Centering Parenting: Innovative models for prenatal, well-woman, and well-baby care**
on April 30 from 3:00 – 4:00 PM EST
- EPIC Center website: <http://www.healthystartepic.org>
 - Includes all recorded webinars, transcripts, and slide presentations