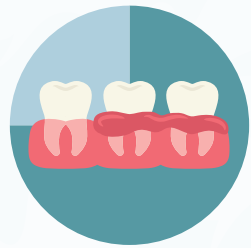


Gum Disease during Pregnancy

Multiple studies have found **gum disease** to be an independent risk factor for **preterm labor (before 37 weeks)** and/or **low birthweight (less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces)**



An estimated
75%
of American adults
have some form
of **gum disease**

=



About
1 in 10
babies is
born premature



About
1 in 12
babies is born with
low birthweight

What is gum disease?

Also referred to as **periodontal disease**, gum disease is a common but largely preventable condition where the bacteria in plaque cause inflammation of the gums and affect the supporting areas around the teeth.

A “silent” disease, its symptoms may go unnoticed in the early stages. Left untreated, it can become painful and lead to very serious problems, including tooth loss.

There are two main types:

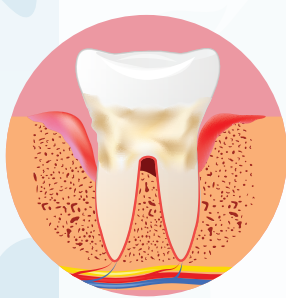
Gingivitis

A mild form of gum disease, marked by red, swollen and/or bleeding gums.



Periodontitis

A serious condition causing gums to recede from the teeth, creating pockets that become infected. As it worsens, the body’s immune system may respond by destroying the tissues and bone that hold the teeth in place.

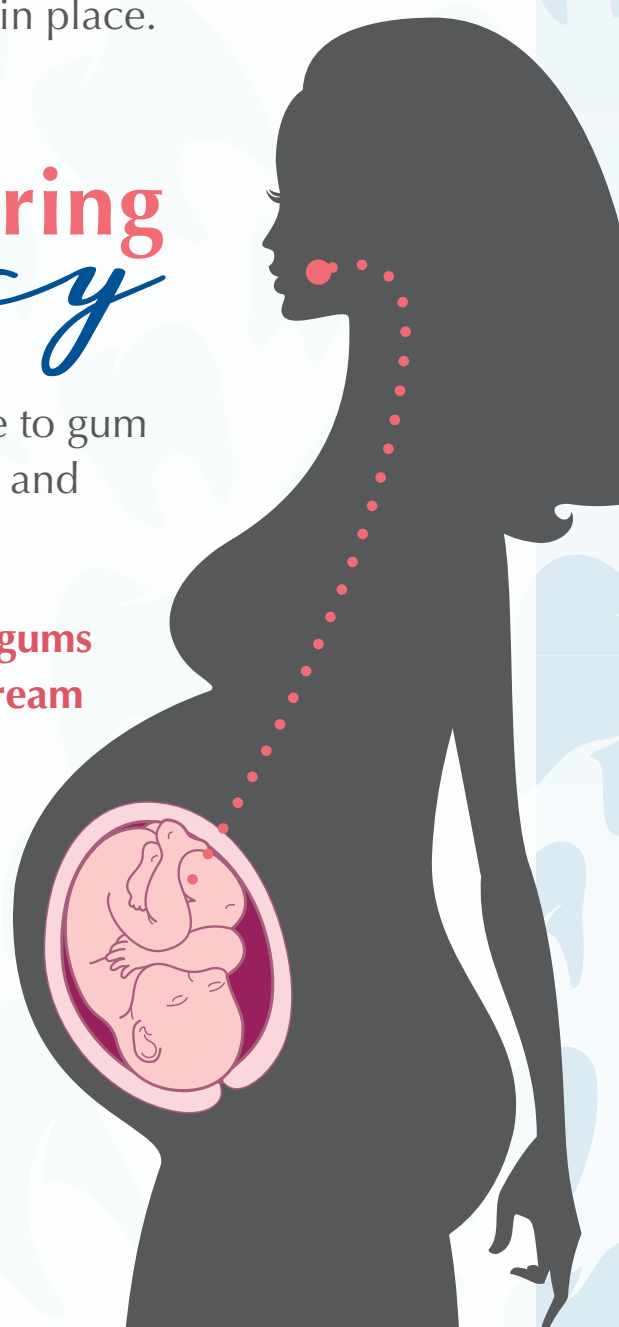


Gum disease during pregnancy

Pregnant women can be more prone to gum disease due to fluctuating hormones and increased blood volume.

The same bacteria that inflame the gums can end up in the woman’s bloodstream and target the baby, potentially triggering preterm labor or low birth weight.

Gum disease treatment may reduce premature birth and low birthweight in women who develop gingivitis during pregnancy.



symptoms to watch for

Bad breath • Red or swollen gums • Gums that easily bleed
Tender, sore gums • Pain or trouble chewing
Tooth sensitivity • Loose teeth • Receding gums

Treating gum disease?

You may need one or a combination of the following treatment options, all of which are safe during pregnancy. Your treatment plan will depend upon the severity of your gum disease and other factors.



Good oral hygiene at home

Regular brushing, flossing and rinsing at home is a necessary part of any treatment plan. Ask your dentist or dental hygienist about proper technique and how often is best for you.



Prescription mouth rinse

Your dentist may prescribe a special type of mouthwash to control bacteria.



Professional cleanings

A routine dental cleaning can be effective in reversing the early stages of gum disease. During pregnancy, your dentist may recommend more frequent cleanings.



Antibiotics

A round of pregnancy-approved antibiotics can help fight bacterial infection in the mouth. Make sure to share if you have any allergies.



Scaling and root planing or deep cleaning

For more severe stages, this procedure scrapes tartar from above and below the gum line and removes rough spots on the tooth’s root where germs collect.



Surgery

In extreme cases when other treatment methods have failed, surgical intervention may be required.

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