



BOUNCING BABY TO

PARENTS' GUIDE

TO CREATING HEALTHY DENTAL HABITS

TEETHING TODDLER

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INTRODUCTION

It recently dawned on me that there was a serious lack of information about oral health for women while they're pregnant. *Well actually, my wife made me aware of this.*

I'm Dr. Rachels and I'm a dentist in Nashville, TN (more specifically Franklin, TN). My practice, TriStar Dental Studio is the culmination of years of learning and working. My wife, Elizabeth, is a marketing professional and helped translate all of the nitty gritty dental jargon. Together, we hope that we can help prepare you for all of the amazing changes that you and your little one will go through!

Our goal with this book is to break down the basics of maternal dental care and to get you ready for all the changes your child will go through as they develop teeth of their own!

*Dr. Scott Rachels
Elizabeth Rachels*

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PREGNANCY & THE CHANGES IN YOUR ORAL HEALTH

01

First of all, congratulations! Whether this is your first pregnancy or you're a veteran momma, this is an incredible time in your life! There are so many amazing and beautiful changes going on in your body and your world right now. It can be easy to become overwhelmed by all of the advice (solicited and un-solicited). Sometimes it seems like there is no, "right" way to do this motherhood thing. Good news? Women have been doing it since, well, forever. The better news? There are so many amazing advances in understanding pregnancy and the journey that you're on!

It's important to maintain your dental hygiene while pregnant, since certain issues are more common. You should brush your teeth 2x a day with fluoridated toothpaste. This is perfectly safe for both you and your bun in the oven! If you haven't seen a dentist in over 6 months, you should schedule a routine check-up. This will allow your dentist to make sure that you aren't developing any pregnancy related oral health issues and can help alleviate any that may have already come up.

While at your appointment:

- Make sure that your dentist positions your head higher than your feet, to help prevent dizziness.
- Let your dentist know if you become uncomfortable and need to change up how you're sitting.
- Ask your dentist prior to your appointment if they have a small pillow available at their office. This can be placed under your right hip, to keep you from getting dizzy.
- Talk to your dentist and hygienist about your pregnancy and if there is anything about it that might make it a little more unique.
- Let your dentist know of any new concerns you might have. Be open and honest! For example, if your gums are more sensitive, let them know. They can help you navigate these changes in a safe way.
- Get their professional opinion. Many times, pregnancy related oral health concerns will resolve on their own and aren't indicators for anything more serious. However, it's always important to get advice on how to approach your unique situation.

What are some common issues that might pop up while you're pregnant?

GUMS

Your gums can become far more sensitive in general. They might be more prone to bleeding, which is one of the most common complaints we receive from mommas-to-be. This won't last forever either, but it's always a good idea to get your own dentist's opinion.

One of the biggest oral health concerns actually doesn't involve your teeth, but your gums. Sometimes a bump can occur in your mouth. The fancy term for it is a **PYOGENIC GRANULOMA** and it is *very* common in pregnant women. Don't be freaked out by this little guy though! It's harmless and more irritating than anything else.

It can show up on your gums or the inside of your mouth on the cheeks. It is a swelling of tissue that can occur anywhere in the mouth, but they are most commonly found around your teeth. These typically resolve on their own after pregnancy, but it is always important to see a dentist to make sure that everything looks normal. This might need to be removed if it doesn't go away postpartum.



TEETH

There are only two reasons that we can have issues with our teeth; trauma and acid. Ok, maybe not the scariest villains you've ever heard of, but trauma or substances (food or liquids) that come into contact with your teeth can break down your enamel. You might have become more aware of your enamel, thanks to a recent surge in TV ads promoting toothpastes.

TRAUMA

I'm assuming that you've given up any kind of physical activity that might result in trauma to your mouth. A small subset of trauma is when you have a *bad bite* or *crowded teeth*. The reason this can cause mild trauma is because of the way you bite down or possibly grind your teeth. There are a number of solutions for this, like braces or a mouth guard.

ACID

The acid factor is pretty simple too. This comes from acidic foods/drinks and the bacteria that feed on sugar. So it's important, especially while pregnant, to maintain great hygiene. You've hopefully cut out a lot of the leading culprits of acidic drinks (coffee, wine and soda), so that is a big accomplishment! It's important to know what types of foods are acidic and how to eat them in a safe way. I promise, there is a safe way!

Acid

Enamel becomes weekend at a **PH** of **5** or lower. Let's break that down into some common categories.

0 PH ----- 7PH ----- 14PH
Highly Acidic Neutral Basic

0-5PH = HIGHLY ACIDIC FOODS + DRINKS; definitely brush your teeth after these bad boys.

PRO TIP: *Can't find a toothbrush right after you have something acidic? That's ok! Get a cup of tap water (tap water contains fluoride) and swish it around in your mouth after your snack.*

Fruit

- lemons (2-2.6ph)
- limes (2-2.8ph)
- grapes (2.9-3.8ph)
- pomegranates (2.93-3.2ph)
- grapefruit (3-3.75ph)
- blueberries (3.12-3.33ph)
- pineapple (3.2-4.0ph)
- apples (3.30-4.0ph)
- peaches (3.3-4.05ph)
- oranges (3.69-4.34ph)
- tomatoes (4.3-4.9ph)



Vegetables

sauerkraut (3.3-3.6ph)

cabbage (5.2-6.8ph)

beets (5.3-6.60ph)

corn (5.9-7.5ph)

Other types of foods that are acidic or cause acidity

grains

sugar

certain dairy products

fish

processed foods

fresh meats and processed meats

sodas and other sweetened beverages

high protein foods and supplements

It's all about being aware of the acidity in your food and knowing how to neutralize it, so that it doesn't harm your teeth. Don't eat these foods or drinks over an extended period of time and always remember to swish with tap water after!

It's amazing how little changes can improve your health! Let's now look at the development of your baby and what their dental journey looks like!



HOW YOUR CHILD'S TEETH CHANGE AS THEY DEVELOP



A FETUS WILL START DEVELOPING THEIR TEETH AS EARLY AS THE **6TH WEEK** OF PREGNANCY! YOUR BODY IS HARD AT WORK TO GIVE YOUR BABY ALL THE NUTRIENTS HE OR SHE NEEDS TO GROW THE DENTIN.

THEN AROUND THE **3RD OR 4TH MONTH** OF PREGNANCY, YOUR LITTLE ONE WILL START GROWING THEIR ENAMEL.

What your body needs to grow your baby's teeth.

NECESSARY NUTRIENTS

CALCIUM

#1 ingredient of teeth

It's important to get enough calcium in your diet, because your body will start to pull it from bones in your body to give to your baby.

Common misconception: calcium cannot be pulled from your teeth!

Where to get it: Kale and other leafy greens

PHOSPHORUS

This is what makes teeth hard

Good News! It's in almost every food! It's very rare for someone to be phosphorus deficient.

VITAMIN D

This is the vitamin that makes absorbing calcium & phosphorus possible. It only occurs naturally in the body when skin is exposed to sunlight. If your vitamin D levels are found to be low, a doctor might recommend a supplement.

PROTEIN

Protein allows your body to build and repair tissue. It's very plentiful and is easily incorporated into your diet. If you're a vegetarian, it's important to make sure you are getting amino acids.



LET'S GET GROWING!

TEETHING BEGINS

BABIES TYPICALLY BEGIN TO TEETH AT AROUND 4-6 MONTHS

Teething is painful and your baby will be looking for anything that can help soothe their discomfort. Luckily there are a couple natural options! You can lightly freeze a washcloth and allow them to chew on that. There are also many frozen teething rings that you can purchase at every-day retailers.

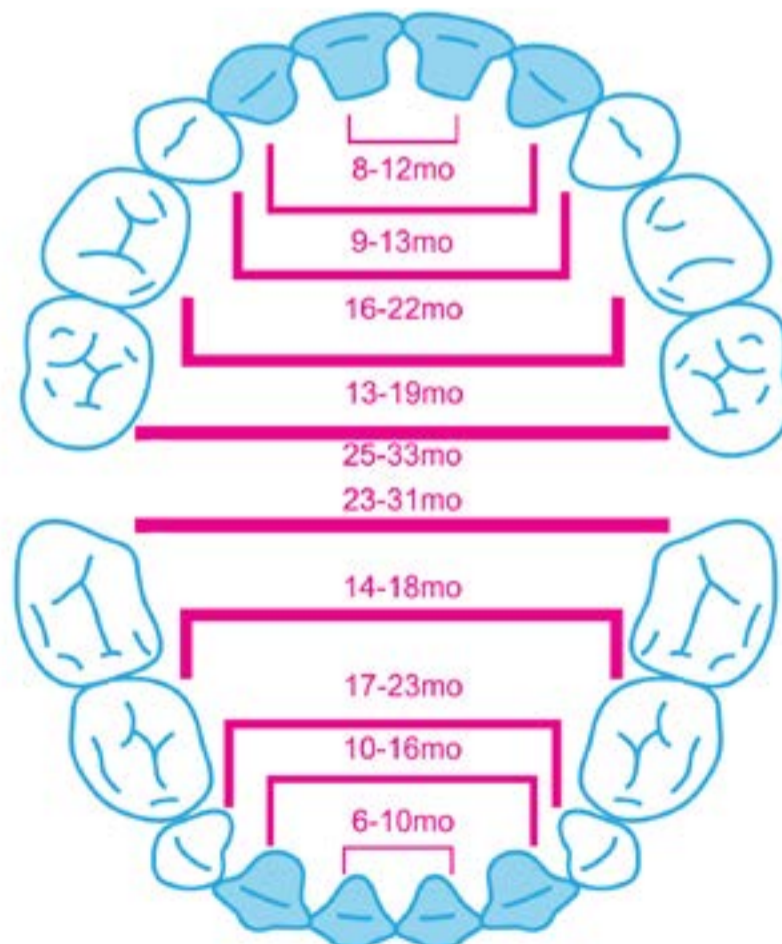
Pro Tip: Make sure that the frozen teether isn't too cold. You can always freeze two of the same teether and use one to test out yourself. We want to make certain that it isn't so cold that it freezes gum tissue.

When to seek additional help: Consult with your pediatrician or family doctor if your child doesn't seem to be soothed by teethers. They might recommend a medicinal gel or children's Tylenol. Please speak with your trusted physician before introducing any kind of medicine to your baby.

HERE THEY COME!

You should start to see the bottom front teeth come in then the top front teeth. Here is a chart that will give you a general idea of when to expect your baby's teeth to start coming in.

Sometimes children are born missing an adult tooth or have an extra. This is totally ok and can easily be handled later in life with orthodontia. These conditions are not a reflection of nutritional deficiencies or anything else within your realm of control. It is purely genetic and will have little to no impact on them in the long run!



CREATING GOOD HABITS AT AN EARLY AGE!



- 01.** Brushing 2x a day. This sounds pretty simple, but as parents you have a million little jobs to do and it can be easy to forget this from time to time. It gets a lot easier when you've taught your children to be personally responsible for brushing their teeth. You can get a timer for them to use so they can keep track of how long they've brushed. Once they're done, you can give them a little positive reinforcement like praising their healthy habits.
- 02.** Introduce flossing early. Want to set them up for a lifetime of easy dental checkups? This is the absolute best way to do it! If someone isn't introduced to habits like this early, it can be hard to adopt them as adults. There are so many fun ways to incorporate flossing into their nightly routine - colorful flossers are great for children 3 years or older. Read instructions and make sure that your child is old enough to use these safely.
- 03.** Limit sweet treats and sugary drinks. Sugar leads to bacteria in the mouth, which is what causes almost every imaginable dental issue. Limit the amount of sweets and make sure they rinse their mouth and brush their teeth after anything sugary!

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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