Dental Health in Pregnancy Explained | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/dental-health-important-pregnancy/

Details:

Dental health matters during pregnancy because hormonal changes can make the gums more prone to inflammation, and looking after your mouth supports both your wellbeing and your baby's. Visiting the dentist while you are pregnant is generally safe, and a check-up is a sensible step. At Core Dental we encourage expectant mothers to book a dental visit early, tell us about their pregnancy and any symptoms, and keep up daily brushing and cleaning between the teeth.

Is it safe to visit the dentist while pregnant?

Yes. A common misconception is that dental visits during pregnancy are unsafe. A check-up during pregnancy is generally safe and is an important part of looking after your own dental health and your baby's. Let our team know how far along you are and about any medicines or medical conditions, so we can plan your care. Some treatments may be timed to suit your stage of pregnancy, and your dentist will discuss this with you.

What should you do before becoming pregnant?

If you are planning a pregnancy, a dental check-up beforehand is a good idea. It lets your dentist find and treat gum disease, tooth decay or infections early, so they are less likely to flare up once you are pregnant. Maintaining good oral health throughout pregnancy helps reduce the chance of gum inflammation and of more serious complications.

How does pregnancy affect your gums?

Pregnancy brings a rise in hormones such as oestrogen and progesterone. These changes can affect how your gums respond to the bacteria in dental plaque, which makes gum inflammation more likely. Gum disease is common during pregnancy, and many women notice symptoms such as bleeding gums, gum sensitivity or sensitive teeth. It is worth mentioning these symptoms to your dentist rather than waiting for them to settle.

What is pregnancy gingivitis?

Pregnancy gingivitis is a common, reversible and temporary condition in which the gums become inflamed. You may notice redness, swelling, sensitivity, and bleeding when you brush or floss. Careful daily brushing, cleaning between the teeth and professional cleaning can help keep it under control. Your dentist or hygienist can show you techniques suited to your mouth. See also our guide on keeping your gums healthy .

Can gum disease during pregnancy affect your baby?

Gum disease that is severe because bacteria are not well controlled has been associated with risks for the unborn child, including premature labour and low birth weight. This is one reason we encourage regular care and early treatment of gum problems. Talk with your dentist and your doctor or midwife about your individual situation.

What are pregnancy tumours?

Hormonal changes combined with normal levels of bacteria can sometimes cause harmless but unsightly lumps on the gums, called pregnancy tumours or pyogenic granulomas. They appear as lumpy, red swellings between the teeth. They normally resolve after the birth, particularly with regularly maintained oral hygiene. If one bleeds easily or bothers you, ask your dentist to take a look.

How does morning sickness affect your teeth?

Frequent vomiting coats the teeth with strong stomach acid, which can weaken the enamel and increase the risk of tooth decay and erosion. Many women are not aware that morning sickness can cause lasting damage to teeth. After vomiting or reflux:

rinse your mouth with water

chew sugar-free gum, or if possible have a dairy food such as milk or cheese, which can help neutralise acid

avoid brushing for at least 30 minutes after an episode, because the softened enamel is more easily worn

if you still want to freshen your mouth, gently smear a little fluoride toothpaste over your teeth with a clean finger, without scrubbing

How can we help?

Our dentists and hygienists can check your gums and teeth, give you advice for each stage of pregnancy and plan any care that is needed, at any of our nine Core Dental clinics. Call 13 13 16 or book online at coredental.com.au. We quote before treatment starts, and we offer interest-free payment plans. Read more about our dental check-ups and hygiene appointments .

Can you get priority dental care in Victoria while pregnant?

Yes, if you are eligible for public dental care, and this is the single most practical thing on this page for anyone who cannot readily pay for private treatment during a pregnancy.

The Victorian Department of Health operates public dental services "through the Royal Dental Hospital Melbourne (RDHM) and more than 40 integrated and registered community health services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations across Victoria." Within that system, eligibility and priority are two separate things, and pregnancy affects the second.

The department lists "pregnant people" among the groups who have priority access to public dental services. What priority access means is set out directly: those with it "are offered the next available appointment for general care. They are not placed on the general waiting list." The other priority groups are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, children and young people, people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, refugees and asylum seekers, and people registered with mental health or disability services who have a letter of recommendation from their case manager or a special developmental school.

Priority access does not by itself establish eligibility, which is a separate test. For adults, the department lists as eligible "people aged 18 years and over, who are health care or pensioner concession card holders or dependants of concession card holders". Separately, and regardless of card status, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and all refugees and asylum seekers are eligible.

So the position for a pregnant patient is this: if you meet the eligibility criteria, pregnancy should mean you are offered the next available general appointment rather than joining the general waiting list. If you do not meet them, the priority grouping does not open access on its own.

Two things we cannot tell you. We cannot confirm your eligibility — that assessment belongs to the public clinic. And we cannot quote a waiting time, because the department does not publish one. To pursue it, contact a community dental clinic or the Royal Dental Hospital Melbourne directly, and say that you are pregnant when you make contact.

The department also notes where to take a concern about care received: "they should contact the clinic which provided the care or the Health Complaints Commissioner."

Source: Victorian Department of Health, Access to Victoria's public dental care services, health.vic.gov.au (updated 7 October 2026; accessed 3 November 2026).

What is funded for the baby once they arrive?

It is worth knowing early, because the eligibility clock is tied to a calendar year rather than to a birthday.

The Child Dental Benefits Schedule covers children from birth. Services Australia's conditions are that the child is eligible for Medicare, is "between 0 and 17 years old for at least one day that calendar year", and that the child or a parent, carer or guardian receives an eligible payment at least once that calendar year. Families do not need to apply or register; Services Australia writes to those whose child is eligible.

The benefit covers "up to $1,158 for each eligible child over 2 calendar years", indexed each 1 January. That is the published figure as at November 2026, so confirm the current amount with Services Australia. Covered services include check-ups, X-rays, cleaning, fissure sealing, fillings, root canals and extractions; orthodontic work, cosmetic work and any dental services in a hospital are excluded.

In Victoria there is a second route for young children that does not depend on a concession card at all: the Department of Health lists "all children aged 0–12 years" as eligible for public dental care.

Source: Services Australia, Who can get the Child Dental Benefits Schedule, servicesaustralia.gov.au (page last updated 15 April 2026; accessed 3 November 2026).

Frequently asked questions

Can I have a dental check-up when I am pregnant?

Yes. Check-ups are generally safe during pregnancy and are encouraged. Tell our team you are pregnant when you book, mention your medicines and any symptoms, and your dentist will plan your visit and any treatment around your stage of pregnancy.

Why are my gums bleeding more now that I am pregnant?

Hormonal changes can make gums more reactive to plaque, so bleeding when you brush or floss is common in pregnancy. It is a good reason to see your dentist or hygienist for a check and professional clean.

Should I brush straight after morning sickness?

It is better to rinse with water first and wait at least 30 minutes before brushing, because stomach acid softens the enamel. A little fluoride toothpaste smeared on the teeth with a finger can freshen your mouth in the meantime.

Will pregnancy gingivitis go away?

Pregnancy gingivitis is generally temporary and reversible. Good daily oral hygiene and professional care help keep it under control, and symptoms often settle after the baby is born. Tell your dentist if it is severe or persists.

Is it worth seeing a dentist before I get pregnant?

Yes. A check-up before pregnancy allows gum disease, decay or infection to be treated early. This can reduce the risk of problems during pregnancy.

Does pregnancy give me priority for public dental care in Victoria?

The Victorian Department of Health lists pregnant people among the groups with priority access to public dental services, which means being offered the next available appointment for general care rather than being placed on the general waiting list. Priority access applies to people who are eligible for public dental care; it does not establish eligibility by itself, which the public clinic assesses.

Am I eligible for public dental care as an adult?

The department lists people aged 18 and over as eligible where they hold a health care or pensioner concession card, or are dependants of a card holder. Separately, and regardless of card status, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and all refugees and asylum seekers are eligible. Eligibility is assessed by the public clinic rather than by a dental practice.

How long will I wait for a public appointment while pregnant?

We cannot tell you, because the Victorian Department of Health does not publish a waiting time. What it does state is that people with priority access are offered the next available appointment for general care instead of joining the general waiting list. Contact a community dental clinic or the Royal Dental Hospital Melbourne and tell them you are pregnant.

When does my child become eligible for the Child Dental Benefits Schedule?

From birth, subject to the conditions. Services Australia requires that the child is eligible for Medicare, is between 0 and 17 years old for at least one day that calendar year, and that the child or a parent, carer or guardian receives an eligible payment at least once that calendar year. There is nothing to apply for: Services Australia writes to families whose child is eligible.

Is there public dental care for young children in Victoria regardless of a concession card?

The Victorian Department of Health lists all children aged 0 to 12 years as eligible for public dental care, without reference to a concession card. Eligibility is confirmed by the public clinic.

Related services and further reading

Dental check-ups

Dental hygiene

Are women more prone to oral health problems?

How to keep your gums healthy

Why do people suffer from gum disease?

Acid attack: the effects of acidic drinks on tooth enamel

Safe dental X-rays

What to expect at your first Core Dental appointment

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts, with interest-free payment plans and HICAPS on-site claiming.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online via coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed
Clinics	Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside , Glenferrie

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

Is it safe to see a dentist during pregnancy?

Yes. A dental check-up during pregnancy is generally safe and encouraged. At Core Dental we ask about your stage of pregnancy and medical history so your dentist can plan care that suits you.

How does pregnancy change gum health?

Pregnancy hormones can make gums react more strongly to plaque, so redness, swelling and bleeding are common. Core Dental dentists and hygienists can check your gums and show you how to keep them healthy.

What does pregnancy gingivitis feel like?

Pregnancy gingivitis is a reversible, temporary inflammation of the gums that causes redness, swelling, sensitivity and bleeding when brushing or flossing. Core Dental hygienists can help you manage it with cleaning and technique advice.

Can morning sickness damage teeth?

Yes. Repeated vomiting exposes teeth to stomach acid, which can weaken enamel. Our Core Dental team advises rinsing with water and waiting at least 30 minutes before brushing.

What are pregnancy tumours on the gums?

Pregnancy tumours, or pyogenic granulomas, are harmless red lumps that can appear between the teeth because of hormonal changes. They normally settle after birth. Core Dental dentists can check any lump that bleeds or bothers you.

Should I book a dental visit before trying to conceive?

A check-up before pregnancy lets Core Dental dentists find and treat gum disease, decay or infection early, which can lower the chance of problems while you are pregnant.

How do I book a dental appointment at Core Dental?

Call 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au. We are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings across our nine clinics, and we quote before treatment starts.