

SMOKING AND PREGNANCY



Smoking is always harmful to your health, but if you smoke while you are pregnant, it is also harmful to your baby's health. Smoking during pregnancy has been linked to many health problems, including¹:

- Low birth weight
- Premature birth
- Certain birth defects
- Pregnancy loss

Smoking is also linked to gum disease. Research shows that a pregnant woman with gum disease has a greater risk of having a baby born too early or too small. Because of hormonal changes during pregnancy, women who are expecting are already at an increased risk of developing gum disease. So if you smoke and are pregnant, your risk for gum disease is even greater.^{2,3}

Quitting smoking, even if you are already pregnant, can help you avoid health problems caused by smoking. It can also make a big difference for you and your baby. Talk to your doctor about how you can quit smoking and give your baby a healthy start in life.

¹"Smoking and pregnancy: Understand the risks." MayoClinic.org. March 19, 2015. <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/indepth/smoking-and-pregnancy/art-20047021>. Accessed 26 July 2017

²"Periodontal (Gum) Disease: Causes, Symptoms, and Treatments." The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. NIH Publication No. 13-1142. September 2013

³Heather Jared, BSDH, MS and Kim A. Boggess, MD, "Periodontal Diseases and Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes: A Review of the Evidence and Implications for Clinical Practice." 2008 Journal of Dental Hygiene. https://www.adha.org/resources-docs/7838_Periodontal_Diseases_and_Adverse_Pregnancy_Outcomes.pdf. Accessed 26 July 2017

You and your children need to have regular check-ups at your Dental Home. A Dental Home is the dentist's office where you go regularly every six months. Choosing the right dentist is very important. If you are covered by **Cardinal Care Smiles** (VA Medicaid, FAMIS or FAMIS Plus), we will help you choose a dentist you like and trust.

Use the Find a Dentist tool on DentaQuest.com to find a provider near you or call member services at 1-888-912-3456.



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