Oral Health During Pregnancy

- Pregnancy is a unique period characterized by physiological changes, which may adversely affect oral health.
- Oral health is key to overall health and well-being.
- Preventive, diagnostic, and restorative dental treatment is safe throughout pregnancy.
Health professionals often do not provide oral health care to pregnant women.

Pregnant women often do not seek or receive oral health care.

Some pregnant women and health professionals do not understand that oral health care is an important component of a healthy pregnancy.
Most young children acquire caries-causing bacteria from their mothers.

Educating pregnant women about preventing and treating dental caries is critical.

Counseling may reduce transmission of bacteria from mothers to young children, thereby delaying or preventing onset of caries.
Background

- Existing statements and recommendations for improving oral health care during pregnancy from:
  - American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
  - American Academy of Pediatrics
  - American Academy of Periodontology
  - American Academy of Physician Assistants
  - American College of Nurse-Midwives
  - American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
  - American Dental Association
Several states have guidelines for perinatal oral health care.

- California
- New York
- South Carolina
- Washington
Consensus Development Expert Workgroup Meeting

- Convened by Health Resources and Services Administration in collaboration with American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Dental Association.
- Met on October 18, 2011, in Washington, DC.
- Reviewed policies, literature, and guidelines on oral health care during pregnancy.
- Identified common ground to increase health professionals’ awareness of importance and safety of oral health care during pregnancy.
National Consensus Statement Purpose

- Help professionals improve the provision of oral health care services during pregnancy.
- Bring about changes in the health-care-delivery system.
- Improve overall standard of care.
Guidance for Prenatal Care Health Professionals

- Assess pregnant women’s oral health status.
- Advise pregnant women about oral health care.
- Work in collaboration with oral health professionals.
- Provide support services (case management) to pregnant women.
- Improve health services in the community.
Assess Pregnant Women’s Oral Health Status

- Take oral health history.
- Check mouth for problems (e.g., swollen or bleeding gums, untreated dental decay, mucosal lesions, signs of infection, or trauma).
- Document findings in the medical record.
Guidance for Prenatal Care Health Professionals

Advise Pregnant Women About Oral Health Care

- Reassure women that oral health care is safe throughout pregnancy.
- Advise women about scheduling appointment with a dentist.
- Provide referral, if needed.
- Encourage women to seek oral health care, practice good oral hygiene, eat healthy foods, and attend prenatal classes during pregnancy.
- Counsel women to follow oral health professionals’ recommendations.
Guidance for Prenatal Care Health Professionals

Work in Collaboration with Oral Health Professionals

- Establish relationships with oral health professionals in the community.
- Develop a formal referral process.
- Share pertinent information about pregnant women.
- Coordinate care.
Provide Support Services (Case Management) to Pregnant Women

- Help pregnant women complete applications for insurance and other coverage, social services, or other needs.
- If woman does not have a dental home, explain importance of oral health during pregnancy and help her obtain care.
Guidance for Prenatal Care Health Professionals

**Improve Health Services in the Community**

- Include questions about oral health on the prenatal patient-intake form.
- Establish partnerships with community-based programs.
- Provide a referral to a dietitian if counseling would help.
- Integrate oral health topics into prenatal classes.
- Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care.
Guidance for Oral Health Professionals

- Assess pregnant women’s oral health status.
- Advise pregnant women about oral health care.
- Work in collaboration with prenatal care health professionals.
- Provide oral disease management and treatment.
- Provide support services (case management).
- Improve health services in the community.
Guidance for Oral Health Professionals

Assess Pregnant Women’s Oral Health Status

- Take oral health history.
- Review medical and dietary histories, including use of tobacco, alcohol, and recreational drugs.
- Perform comprehensive oral examination.
- Take radiographs when clinically indicated.
Work in Collaboration with Prenatal Care Health Professional

- Establish relationships with prenatal care health professional in the community and develop a formal referral process.
- Share pertinent information about pregnant women, and coordinate care.
- Consult with prenatal care health professional, as necessary.
Advise Pregnant Women About Oral Health Care

- Reassure pregnant women that oral health care is safe during pregnancy, including
  - Radiographs
  - Pain medications
  - Local anesthesia
Guidance for Oral Health Professionals

Advise Pregnant Women About Oral Health Care

- Encourage pregnant women to
  - Seek oral health care
  - Practice good oral hygiene
  - Eat healthy foods
  - Attend prenatal classes
Provide Oral Disease Management and Treatment to Pregnant Women

- Provide emergency or acute care at any time during pregnancy.
- Discuss benefits and risks of treatment and alternatives.
- Develop and provide a comprehensive care plan.
Guidance for Oral Health Professionals

Provide Oral Disease Management and Treatment to Pregnant Women

- Use standard practice when placing restorative materials.
- Use rubber dam during endodontic and restorative procedures.
- Position pregnant woman comfortably when providing care.
- Follow up with pregnant women.
Guidance for Oral Health Professionals

Provide Support Services (Case Management) to Pregnant Women

- Help pregnant women complete applications for insurance or other sources of coverage, social services, or other needs.
- If woman does not have a prenatal care health professional, explain the importance of care, and facilitate referrals.
Guidance for Oral Health Professionals

Improve Health Services in the Community

- Record prenatal care health professional’s name and contact information on the patient-intake form.
- Accept women enrolled in Medicaid and other public insurance programs.
- Establish partnerships with community-based programs that serve pregnant women with low incomes.
- Refer to nutrition professional, if beneficial.
- Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care.
Pharmacological Considerations

Pharmacological agents:

- Analgesics
- Antibiotics
- Anesthetics
- Over-the-counter antimicrobials
Guidance for Health Professionals to Share with Pregnant Women

Tips for Good Oral Health During Pregnancy and After the Baby Is Born

- Get oral health care.
- Practice good oral hygiene.
- Eat healthy foods.
- Practice other healthy behaviors.
- Take care of her mouth and her baby’s mouth after the baby is born.
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