



Expecting Mothers Should “Brush Up” on Their Oral Hygiene Routine

Two new studies emphasize the potential link between periodontal diseases and adverse pregnancy outcomes.

CHICAGO—November 12, 2007—With November being National Prematurity Awareness month, two new studies in the November issue of the *Journal of Periodontology (JOP)* emphasize the importance of expectant mothers taking extra care of their oral health.

Researchers have long speculated that women with periodontal diseases may have an increased risk of adverse pregnancy outcomes. [One study of 3,576 Turkish women](#) found that those with periodontal disease were at a greater risk for having a low birth weight and preterm birth babies than those without periodontal disease. In addition, [a second study](#) found that nonsurgical treatments for periodontal disease can actually reduce a woman’s risk for delivering preterm.

“Our study found that treating a woman’s periodontal disease decreased her chances of having her baby early by almost 50%,” explained study author Fouzia Tarannum, BDS, M.R. Ambedkar Dental College and Hospital, India. “Our research suggests that treatment of periodontal diseases can help the health of the mother and her baby.”

“The AAP is dedicated to increasing awareness about the relationship between periodontal diseases and pregnancy,” said [Susan Karabin](#), DDS, President of the American Academy of Periodontology. “Women should be sure to brush and floss daily, and see their dental health professional regularly if possible before and certainly during their pregnancy. Working as a team, the dental professional and expectant mother will be able to help deliver a full-term, healthy and happy baby.”

Much is being done to help prevent preterm low birth weight births. In honor of National Prematurity Month the AAP has teamed up with the March of Dimes to help support their “Every Baby Has a Story” campaign, aimed at educating expecting mothers about premature births.

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