

Second Opinion

by Dr. Vladimir Pastouk



Periodontal Health for Expecting Moms

Extra care for your gums before and during pregnancy increases the chances of delivering a full-term baby, says Dr. Vladimir Pastouk, of *Dental and Cosmetic Solutions*.

Q My daughter is expecting her first child in the fall. Is dental care during pregnancy safe, and will it increase her chances of delivering a healthy baby?

A Congratulations on the upcoming addition to your family. Yes, dental care is not only safe during pregnancy, but studies have demonstrated that maintaining strong gums helps reduce inflammation that might contribute to preeclampsia (high blood pressure and organ damage), preterm birth, and low birth weight. Many pregnant women develop gingivitis, and a certain amount of gum inflammation is not unexpected. But gingivitis often leads to an increase in a certain type of oral bacteria that has been found in the amniotic fluid of women who delivered preterm babies. One study demonstrated that the oral strain of a different bacteria caused stillbirth and was found in the infant's lungs and stomach. In other words, oral bacteria and bacterial products can enter the placenta, cause inflammation, and contribute to undesirable pregnancy outcomes.

Q Why are pregnant women prone to developing gingivitis?

A Hormone levels change during pregnancy, often causing inflammation of the periodontal tissue. The gums contain receptors for three hormones associated with pregnancy. If gums are not properly maintained, a surge in these hormones can cause negative effects.

Q That sounds scary. What can my daughter do to protect herself and her child?

A Do not panic because good periodontal care is within reach of everyone. Ideally, proper gum and dental care should begin before pregnancy. Women who are planning to become pregnant or visit an in vitro fertilization clinic are advised to gather as much information about oral hygiene as possible in order to avoid unnecessary pitfalls during their journey to parenthood. If a woman is in the planning phase or is already pregnant but has not seen a dentist in a while, it's not too late. We can offer guidance on proper oral hygiene. I would encourage her

to give us a call and start the proper care today. In addition to the joy of delivering a healthy baby, new moms can take comfort in knowing that some gum inflammation will lessen when their hormones normalize—but they should continue to maintain good dental hygiene habits throughout their lives.



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Dr. Vladimir Pastouk is the founder of Dental and Cosmetic Solutions, located at 3550 Lander Road, Suite 140, in Pepper Pike (Lander Circle). Dr. Pastouk has won several awards and is a distinguished member with the highest honors of several highly acclaimed professional organizations, both nationally and internationally. Email your questions to dentalhelp@gmail.com or contact Dr. Pastouk directly, at 216-292-3600. The web address is DentalCosmeticSolution.com.

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Dr. Vladimir Pastouk will continue his seminar series on dental implant technology on Wednesdays, June 3 and 24, at 6:30 p.m. Meet the doctor and have your questions answered. Seating is limited. Call 216-292-3600 to secure your spot or to schedule a private consultation on the topic of your concern.