

# Better Teeth, Better Health

## Improving Oral Health for Arizona Moms and Babies

The Arizona Public Health Association (AzPHA) advocates that expectant mothers covered through AHCCCS have access to dental care during pregnancy. Good oral health is important for improving both the mother's and the child's overall health, and will result in lower downstream health care costs.



### Problem | Solution!



Pregnancy causes hormonal changes that increase the risk of developing oral health problems like inflammation of the gums AND gum disease.



Improving oral health of expectant mothers and providing oral health education may reduce the transmission of bacteria, delaying the onset of tooth decay among children, and reducing the cost of future dental treatment.

### Did You Know???



Tooth decay is an infectious disease that can be spread! Oral bacteria can be passed from mothers to children through spoon sharing and pacifiers!



There is a link between gum infection and poor birth outcomes.



All infections are a risk for pregnant women because they can harm the health of the baby, and lead to pre-term delivery, low birth-weight babies, and preeclampsia!

### DENTAL CARE FACTS:

Dental care usage during pregnancy remains low due to affordability, lack of insurance, and lack of knowledge on good oral health during pregnancy.

Between 2007 and 2009, **56%** of pregnant women **did NOT** visit a dentist during pregnancy.

Approximately **one third** of all pregnant women have gum disease (periodontal disease).

Preterm birth rate has been reported to be **11.2%** in women without periodontal disease compared to **28.6%** in women with moderate to severe disease.

In 2014, there were almost **87,000** live births in Arizona. More than **6,000** of these births were low birthweight babies, and **7 out of 10** were pre-term.

For more information, contact the Arizona Public Health Association (AzPHA)

[www.AzPHA.org](http://www.AzPHA.org)

