Oral Health Care During Pregnancy
A Resource Guide

Second Edition

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Introduction

The National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center (OHRC) developed this publication, *Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: A Resource Guide*, to provide information to health professionals, program administrators, educators, policymakers, and others working in states and communities in planning, developing, and implementing efforts to ensure that pregnant women receive optimal oral health services. Pregnancy is a unique period during a woman’s life and is characterized by complex physiological changes, which may adversely affect oral health. At the same time, oral health is key to overall health and well-being. Preventive, diagnostic, and restorative dental treatment is safe throughout pregnancy and is effective in improving and maintaining oral health.

However, health professionals often do not provide oral health care to pregnant women, and, at the same time, pregnant women themselves often avoid obtaining it. Oral health care is not routinely included in perinatal care, and many pregnant women with obvious signs of oral disease do not seek or receive care. In many cases, neither pregnant women nor health professionals understand that oral health care is an important component of a healthy pregnancy.

In addition to providing pregnant women with oral health care, educating them about preventing dental caries is critical, both for women’s own oral health and for the future oral health of their children. Evidence suggests that most infants and young children acquire caries-causing bacteria from their mothers. Providing pregnant women with counseling to promote healthy oral health behaviors may reduce the transmission of such bacteria from mothers to infants and young children, thereby delaying or preventing the onset of caries.

For these reasons, it is essential for health professionals (e.g., dentists, dental hygienists, physicians, nurses, midwives, nurse practitioners, physician assistants) to provide pregnant women with appropriate and timely oral health care, which includes oral health education.

The resource guide is divided into three sections. The first section describes materials, such as brochures and handouts, curricula, guidelines, reports, and tools published from 2012 to 2017. The second section lists federal agencies, national professional associations, and resource centers that may serve as resources. And the third section lists materials on oral health care during pregnancy produced by OHRC.

Our intent is to share resources that are useful and represent current science and practice. For further information, we encourage you to contact the organizations listed. Your state and local departments of health, state and local oral-health-related associations and societies, and university-based libraries are additional sources of information. OHRC will update the resource guide periodically, and we would appreciate hearing from you if you know of any relevant resources that are not included in this edition.
Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the following Maternal and Child Health Bureau Perinatal and Infant Oral Health Quality Improvement Initiative grantees for their contributions to the resource guide: Katy Battani, Maryland Department of Health; Brittany Brown, Massachusetts Department of Public Health; Lois Garba and Mary Kenyon Jones, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control; Dana Fischer, Children’s Health Alliance of Wisconsin; Denise Helm, Northern Arizona University; Marty Milkovic, Connecticut Department of Social Services; Ayodele Obashoro, New York State Department of Health; JoAnn Wells, Virginia Department of Health; and Sarah Wovcha, Children’s Dental Services (Minnesota). We would also like to thank Robin Miller, Vermont Oral Health Coalition, for her contributions to the guide.
Materials
Materials

Data and Surveillance

2013 NATIONAL PROFILE OF STATE MEDICAID AND CHIP DENTAL SCREENING: PROGRAM REPORT—PREGNANT WOMEN CDT LEVEL DATA: MEDICAID PROGRAM CALENDAR YEAR—2013

This report provides information about the Code on Dental Procedures and Nomenclature (CDT Code) used to report preventive oral health services for pregnant women on state Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) claims. Contents include information derived from a national survey of Medicaid and CHIP oral health programs for calendar year 2013, organized by state.


ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY, MI PRAMS 2004–2008

This newsletter presents oral health data about pregnant women collected through the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System in Michigan during the period 2004–2008. Topics include oral health status, demographic characteristics of women who did not receive oral health care during pregnancy, and birth outcomes among women who did not seek oral health care during pregnancy.


ORAL HEALTH FOR PREGNANT WOMEN AND CHILDREN

This brief presents data and information about oral health for pregnant women and children. The brief describes why pregnant women’s and children’s oral health is a public health issue, the magnitude of the issue of oral disease in pregnant women and children, trends, national and state goals, state programs and initiatives, public health strategies and practices, and state health agency capacity. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


PRAMSTAT SYSTEM

This data platform provides access to maternal and child health indicators from the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS). Data can be viewed for a single state or across states. Topics include delivery, demographics, infant health, maternal behavior/health, maternal experiences, prenatal care, and insurance. Access to oral health care is included in the All Preconception Health Indicators chart.


PREGNANCY RISK ASSESSMENT MONITORING SYSTEM: SURVEILLANCE REPORT—BIRTH YEARS 2009–2010

This report presents findings from a survey to assess the health of mothers and infants in New Mexico. Topics include preconception health, social determinants, health behaviors, health
services, prenatal and maternity care, postpartum care, and neonatal health and infant care. Trend data is provided for certain indicators. Where possible, each topic also includes a Healthy People 2020 goal for comparing state estimates to national targets. The appendix includes the survey, methodology and details for the sample, survey responses, data weighting, and definitions or coding for reported variables. A query module is also available.


PREVALENCE OF SELECTED MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH INDICATORS—UNITED STATES, ALL SITES, PREGNANCY RISK ASSESSMENT MONITORING SYSTEM (PRAMS), 2012 AND 2013

This document reports the prevalence of selected maternal and child health indicators. Topics include nutrition and physical activity, prepregnancy weight, substance use, intimate partner violence, depression, pregnancy intention and family planning, health care services, oral health, health insurance status, infant sleep practices, and breastfeeding practices. Oral health data include teeth cleaned during 12 months before pregnancy, teeth cleaned during pregnancy, and dental visit during pregnancy.


Policy

DEFINITIONS, ORAL HEALTH POLICIES, AND CLINICAL GUIDELINES

This resource comprises definitions, policies, and clinical guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. Guidelines address topics such as perinatal and infant oral health care and oral health care for pregnant adolescents.


EDUCATE AND ADVOCATE: ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY FOR LOW-INCOME WOMEN IN CALIFORNIA

This brief provides information about the Oral Health Advocacy for Pregnant Women and Children project, a collaboration between Maternal and Child Health Access (MCHA) and the Community Clinics Association of Los Angeles County (CCALAC). Topics include the importance of and need for oral health care during pregnancy, changing dental coverage for women with pregnancy-only Medi-Cal, issues pregnant women face related to obtaining oral health care, issues health professionals face related to providing oral health care to pregnant women, the MCHA and CCALAC partnership, and policy recommendations.


ORAL HEALTH CARE AND COVERAGE DURING PREGNANCY

This brief provides information about the effects of oral disease on pregnant women and infants and state actions to prevent disease and reduce costs. The brief examines insurance coverage for care, including publicly funded coverage and
reimbursement rates; dental expenditures; and where to find state-specific statistics on health status and coverage rates. The brief also discusses state strategies to help pregnant women receive care and provisions in the Affordable Care Act, such as public education and tobacco-cessation services.


ORAL HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY AND THROUGH THE LIFESPAN

This document presents information and recommendations for obstetricians, gynecologists, and others about oral health care during pregnancy and through the lifespan. Topics include general health, common oral health conditions during pregnancy, periodontal disease and pregnancy outcomes, oral health assessment and counseling during pregnancy, and access to oral health care.


STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE DENTAL BENEFITS FOR THE MEDICAID EXPANSION POPULATION

This policy brief summarizes state decisions to include dental benefits for populations newly eligible for Medicaid. It details emerging strategies to ensure access to oral health care for adults, including pregnant women. Topics include tailoring outreach to the targeted population, developing stakeholder engagement, improving network adequacy through financial and non-financial incentives, and expanding the dental work force.


Professional Education, Tools, and Training

2016 PERINATAL CARE RECOMMENDATIONS (REV.)

This document provides a core set of perinatal clinical care guidelines for the general population. Contents include guidelines for the first prenatal visit (6–12 weeks) and at each subsequent prenatal visit (13–42 weeks). Topics include initial and interval history; psychosocial assessment; physical examinations; immunizations; laboratory evaluation and additional testing; oral health; genetic counseling, screening, and testing; general counseling, education, and discussion; and the postpartum visit.


BEST PRACTICE APPROACH: PERINATAL ORAL HEALTH

This resource summarizes evidence supporting strategies to promote perinatal oral health. Contents include a description of perinatal oral health and its significance, barriers to perinatal oral health care, a strategic framework for improving perinatal oral health, and initiatives and coordinated efforts. Additional contents include guidelines and recommendations, research evidence, best practice criteria, and state practice examples. [Funded in part by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]

BRIGHT FUTURES: ORAL HEALTH—POCKET GUIDE (3RD ED.)

This pocket guide offers health professionals an overview of preventive oral health supervision for five periods—pregnancy and postpartum, infancy, early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence. The pocket guide is designed to help health professionals implement specific oral health guidelines during these periods. For each period, information about family preparation, risk assessment, interview questions, screening, examination, preventive procedures, anticipatory guidance, measurable outcomes, and referrals are discussed. The content aligns with *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents* (4th ed.). [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


BRIGHT SMILES FOR BABIES: VIRGINIA ORAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

This manual contains information and resources for implementing Bright Smiles for Babies, a program designed to promote oral health in pregnant women and prevent dental caries in infants and children from birth to age 3 by providing screening and risk assessment, education, fluoride varnish applications, and referrals. The manual includes eight sections, and tab 7 focuses on oral health for pregnant women. Contents include prenatal anticipatory guidance, tips on oral health during pregnancy for pregnant women in English and Spanish, recommendations for integrating professional oral health competencies, and Medicaid reimbursement for oral health care during pregnancy.


BRUSH UP ON ORAL HEALTH

This series provides Head Start staff with information on current practice, practical tips for promoting oral health to share with parents, and recipes for healthy snacks that children can make with Head Start staff or at home with their parents. Health and social service professionals interested in improving the oral health of pregnant women, infants, and children enrolled in Head Start and their families may also find the series helpful. Topics include home visiting, nutrition, pregnancy, and tobacco. Issues published in 2015 are available in English and Spanish.


CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DENTAL TREATMENT OF PREGNANT WOMEN: A RESOURCE FOR CONNECTICUT DENTISTS

This document is designed to help dentists and other health professionals understand the importance of providing oral health services to pregnant women. The document also assists health professionals in making appropriate decisions about pregnant women’s care. Contents include answers to basic questions related to providing oral health services to pregnant women and pharmacological considerations for pregnant women.


DEAR COLLEAGUE LETTER

This letter for health professionals provides information and guidance on best practices for oral health care for pregnant women and their young children. Topics include the importance of oral health care during pregnancy and the impact of tooth decay during pregnancy and early mortality.
DURING PREGNANCY, THE MOUTH MATTERS: A GUIDE TO MICHIGAN PERINATAL ORAL HEALTH

This guide provides information about reducing infant mortality and promoting perinatal oral health in Michigan. It discusses a statewide perinatal oral health initiative, an infant-mortality-reduction plan, the national and local landscapes, and transmission of cariogenic bacteria. It also includes guidance for perinatal care health professionals and oral health professionals, a visual guide for common oral health conditions, and referral resources to assist in facilitating oral health care for pregnant women.


GUIDELINES FOR ORAL HEALTH CARE IN PREGNANCY

This document provides guidelines and recommendations for providing oral health care to pregnant women. It discusses treatment considerations related to hypertension, diabetes, the use of heparin, and the risk of aspiration, as well as positioning clients during procedures. A chart summarizes recommendations during various pregnancy stages.


HEALTHY SMILES FOR MOM AND BABY: INSIGHTS INTO EXPECTING AND NEW MOTHERS’ ORAL HEALTH HABITS

This report summarizes findings from a survey to explore the oral health attitudes and behaviors of expectant and new mothers. Topics include women’s self-rating of oral health before and during pregnancy and oral health problems reported...
during pregnancy; dental checkup participation and coverage, frequency, and cost concerns; routines impacting oral health; participation in healthy pregnancy programs; and the impact of pediatricians’ and other health professionals’ discussions of oral hygiene habits.


**IMPROVE ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY**

This course for dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants focuses on the importance of receiving professional oral health care during pregnancy to maintain oral health. Topics include the importance of maintaining oral health throughout pregnancy, possible oral health complications during pregnancy, appropriate oral health care for pregnant women, and oral hygiene recommendations for this population.


**INTERPROFESSIONAL ORAL HEALTH FACULTY TOOLKIT FOR PRIMARY CARE, NURSE PRACTitioner, AND MIDWIFERY Programs**

This toolkit is intended to facilitate the integration of oral-systemic health content and clinical competencies into nurse practitioner and midwifery curricula. The content describes how to incorporate evidence-based oral-systemic health content, teaching-learning strategies, and clinical experiences into midwifery programs. Contents include an overview, a user guide, and curricular templates. Topics include oral health care during pregnancy, dispelling common myths about oral health during pregnancy, risk factors for periodontal disease during pregnancy and collaborative care planning for women with periodontal disease, tips for good oral health during pregnancy, referral, and helping pregnant women overcome barriers to accessing oral health care.


**MANAGING AND TREATING PREGNANT PATIENTS**

This continuing education course for dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants provides guidance on managing and treating pregnant women. The course highlights evidence-based guidelines for delivering care to pregnant women, including the use of medications and X-rays, positioning, educational messaging, and addressing liability concerns.


**MASSACHUSETTS ORAL HEALTH PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR PREGNANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD**

These guidelines provide oral health care recommendations and resources for health professionals caring for pregnant women and young children. Contents include background information about oral diseases; the status of oral health among pregnant women and children in Massachusetts and national and state efforts to improve it; and the role of prenatal care health professionals, oral health professionals, and pediatric care health professionals in improving pregnant women’s and children’s oral health. Topics include assessing, advising, educating, referring, collaborating, and providing treatment and management. Resources on medication use during pregnancy, sample referral forms, and reproducible handouts on healthy portion sizes and healthy eating during pregnancy are also provided.

ORAL HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY: A NATIONAL CONSENSUS STATEMENT

These resources provide guidance on oral health care for pregnant women for both prenatal care health professionals and oral health professionals, pharmacological considerations for pregnant women, and guidance for health professionals to share with pregnant women. Resources include a consensus statement that resulted from an expert workgroup meeting held on October 18, 2011, in Washington, DC, convened by the Health Resources and Services Administration in collaboration with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Dental Association. Additional resources include the meeting summary, a handout for pregnant women, and a table with pharmacological considerations for pregnant women. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


ORAL HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY: AT-A-GLANCE REFERENCE GUIDE

This guide provides recommendations for oral health professionals and prenatal care health professionals on helping women obtain oral health care during pregnancy. Topics include dental cleanings, emergency or non-elective treatment, radiographs, elective dental procedures, medications, standards of care, strategies for increasing pregnant women’s comfort during treatment, and recommendations for improving or maintaining oral health during pregnancy.


ORAL HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY: AT-A-GLANCE REFERENCE GUIDE

This guide highlights recommendations for both assessment of and anticipatory guidance for pregnant women. It is designed to be used chair-side as a checklist when providing care. Topics include complying with standards of care, strategies for improving pregnant women’s oral health, treating pregnant women, and when to consult with a prenatal care health professional.


ORAL HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD: PRACTICE GUIDELINES

These practice guidelines are intended for use by prenatal care, oral health, and child health professionals in bringing about changes in the health-care-delivery system and improving the standard of care for pregnant women and young children. Contents include information about oral health and pregnancy and oral health and early childhood for prenatal care health professionals, oral health professionals, and pediatric health professionals. An executive summary and instructions for using the guide are also provided. [Partially funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


ORAL HEALTH CARE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

This document presents clinical practice guidelines for the oral health care of pregnant women in South Carolina. The document contains data on infant mortality and preterm birth, oral health...
care and counseling use in South Carolina, and recommendations for health professionals. Topics include strategies to improve access to care, key messages for pregnant women, and the oral health assessment. Recommendations for oral health professionals on conducting a health history, risk assessment, and examination; treating pregnant women; managing disease; and knowing when to consult a prenatal care health professional are provided. Referral forms are included.


**ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD: EVIDENCE-BASED GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND POLICY BRIEF**

These guidelines are designed to help health professionals deliver oral health services to pregnant women and young children. Topics include the importance of oral health; maternal physiological considerations related to oral health; pregnancy, oral conditions, and oral health care; oral health and early childhood; access to care; and systems improvement and public policy changes. Sample forms and websites for parents are included as appendices. A policy brief is also available.


**PREGNANCY & ORAL HEALTH IN THE ACA ERA: HOW ARE EXPECTANT MOMS FARING?**

This webinar, held on September 27, 2016, discussed ways to connect women to oral health coverage and care during pregnancy. Topics included dental insurance options, such as coverage through Medicaid; strategies to integrate oral screenings and referrals into prenatal care; and efforts to educate pregnant women about the importance of oral health care and connect them to services. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


**PRENATAL ORAL HEALTH PROGRAM (POHP)**

These resources are designed to help prenatal primary care professionals and oral health care teams implement and deliver preventive oral health services to women, including those who are pregnant. Contents include videos, guidelines, a referral form and follow-up report card, and a periodicity table. Additional resources for new mothers and pregnant women—including videos on oral health care for pregnant women and infants, a self-evaluation, and a provider locator—are also available in English and Spanish.


**PROMOTING ORAL HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY: AN UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES**

This document is the sixth in a series of updates to highlight activities to promote oral health during pregnancy. Contents include information about the Perinatal and Infant Quality Improvement Initiative pilot projects in Connecticut, New York, and West Virginia to integrate high-quality oral health care into a health care system with statewide reach to improve the oral health status of pregnant women and infants at high risk for oral disease. Additional topics include dissemination and use of the national consensus statement in California, Colorado, Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Information about resources is also included. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]

PROMOTING ORAL HEALTH IN PREGNANCY

This brief describes a study on factors that affect the ability and inclination of pregnant women with low incomes in Connecticut to seek oral health care. The brief outlines reasons for seeking oral health care during pregnancy as well as several barriers related to obtaining care, and it provides recommendations for overcoming barriers.


RESOURCE HIGHLIGHTS

These resources for health professionals highlight key facts, materials, and websites on oral health and pregnancy-related topics. Topics include Head Start, home visiting, nutrition, pregnancy, primary care, quality improvement, and tobacco. Some of the materials and websites are available in English and Spanish. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


RESULTS OF THE WDA MEMBER PERINATAL ORAL HEALTH SURVEY

This article describes a project to increase the use of oral health care for pregnant women and infants by integrating high-quality oral health care into Wisconsin’s health-care-delivery system. The article also presents findings from a survey of dentists about their current practice, knowledge, and interest in continuing education related to oral health care during pregnancy. Topics include dentists’ opinions about the barriers that pregnant women face and strategies to increase their use of oral health services. Information about how the findings will be implemented is included. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


SETTING GOALS FOR ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY

This checklist for home visitors and their clients is designed to help them establish goals for oral health during pregnancy. Topics include making a dentist appointment, going to the dentist, brushing with fluoridated toothpaste, flossing once a day, drinking more tap water, drinking less soda and sugar-sweetened beverages, and eating more fruits and vegetables. The checklist is available in English and Spanish. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


SMILES FOR LIFE: A NATIONAL ORAL HEALTH CURRICULUM (3RD ED.)

This curriculum for health professionals and educators comprises eight courses addressing oral health. Course 5 focuses on pregnancy and women’s oral health. Topics include the importance of oral health before and during pregnancy, the prevalence of oral disease during pregnancy and its consequences for both mothers and children, and treatment guidelines for pregnant women.

TEACHING AND REINFORCING THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HEALTH

This webinar, held on February 24, 2016, focuses on the importance of oral health and oral health care for all pregnant women, infants, children, adolescents, young adults, and their families and on the role of peer preconception educators and others in promoting best practices. Topics include dental caries, strategies for preventing and managing caries, common oral health issues during pregnancy, oral health care during pregnancy, and how to access information about partners and resources for promoting oral health. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


TOOTH TALK: VIDEOS

These videos for Head Start staff and other child care and early education professionals address oral health care for pregnant women, infants, and young children. Topics include the importance of oral health and oral health care during pregnancy. Tips on nutrition and oral hygiene during pregnancy are also included.


Public Education

BRUSHING FOR TWO: A HEALTHY START FOR YOUR BABY

This fact sheet for pregnant women explains why oral health is important and how to maintain good oral health during pregnancy. Contents include information about oral hygiene, nutrition, and the safety of receiving oral health care during pregnancy. The fact sheet is printed in English on one side and in Spanish on the other.


DENTAL CARE DURING PREGNANCY IS SAFE AND IMPORTANT

This infographic and related resources are designed to help health professionals share the message that oral health care is safe and important during pregnancy. Sample images and messages for social media are also available.


DENTAL CARE FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

This flyer provides parents with information about oral health care for themselves and their infants. It offers tips for how to keep the mouth healthy during pregnancy and explains why doing so is important for both pregnant women and their infants. Also included are tips for taking care of infants’ and children’s mouths, contact information for help finding a dentist in Connecticut, and illustrated instructions for how to use dental floss and brush teeth. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]

GIVE YOU AND YOUR BABY A LIFETIME OF HEALTHY TEETH

This webinar, held on March 15, 2017, describes a module designed to help pregnant women and mothers of infants from birth to age 1 in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) learn about oral health and why it is important. The webinar discusses the learning platform (wichealth.org) and explains how data are collected and analyzed, how the module has been implemented in Michigan, and how other states can use it for their WIC clients.


GIVE YOURSELF A HEALTHY MOUTH DURING PREGNANCY

This brochure for pregnant women explains why oral health care is important during pregnancy. It also provides tips on brushing, flossing, visiting the dentist, and choosing healthy foods and drinks. The brochure is available in English and Spanish. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


HEALTHY HABITS FOR HAPPY SMILES

This series of handouts for pregnant women and parents of infants and young children provides simple tips on oral health issues. The series includes a handout on taking care of oral health during pregnancy. The series is available in English and Spanish.


HEALTHY MOUTHS FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

This video provides information on good oral health practices for pregnant women, mothers, and their families. Topics include recognizing early signs of tooth decay and the role of good oral hygiene, good nutrition, and regular dental visits in preventing oral disease. Information about fluorides and oral health during pregnancy is included. The video is available in English and Spanish.


HEALTHY SMILES FROM THE START: DENTAL CARE TIPS FOR MOM AND BABY

These resources for pregnant women and new mothers describe oral health issues that may arise during pregnancy and throughout early childhood and how and why to make healthy habits a priority for everyone in the family. Topics include oral hygiene and oral health care for pregnant women and infants, thumbsucking and pacifiers, teething, and nutrition. Contents include a video, a brochure, a flyer, and a quiz. The resources are available in English and Spanish.


HEALTHY TEETH FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

This brochure for pregnant women focuses on the importance and safety of oral health care during pregnancy. It also includes information about the age-1 dental visit for children and how to find a dentist. The brochure is printed in English on one side and in Spanish on the other.

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ORAL HEALTH CARE DURING PREGNANCY: A RESOURCE GUIDE

IMPROVING ORAL HEALTH

These resources are designed to help health professionals promote oral health coverage in Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and educate pregnant women and parents and other caregivers about good oral health habits. Contents include links to Medicaid and CHIP benefits for children by state and a tool to help families find a dentist. Additional contents include a fact sheet, a flyer, a poster, tear pads, web banners and buttons, social media messages, images for Facebook and Twitter, and newsletter templates in English and Spanish.


KEEP YOUR MOUTH HEALTHY!

These resources focus on the importance of a healthy mouth both before and during pregnancy. Contents include a sharable image, an infographic, and a video. The resources are available in English and Spanish.


ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY/BABY’S FIRST DENTAL VISIT

This bookmark for pregnant women provides information about oral health and oral health care during pregnancy and infancy. Contents include tips on oral hygiene, nutrition, and dental visits during pregnancy on one side and tips on oral health during infancy on the other.


ORAL HEALTH MATTERS: ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY

This fact sheet for pregnant women provides information about oral health during pregnancy and includes tips for good oral health care. The fact sheet also discusses the importance of primary teeth in infants and young children, finding a dentist, and scheduling dental visits. The fact sheet is printed in English on one side and in Spanish on the other.


ORAL HEALTH TIPS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

This resource for pregnant women provides information about the importance of good oral health habits during pregnancy. Contents include tips on coverage for oral health services, how to find information about eligibility for coverage, dental visits, toothbrushing, flossing, and snacking. The resource is available in English and Spanish. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


PREGNANCY AND ORAL HEALTH

This video encourages pregnant women to make oral health a priority during pregnancy and to access preventive care. Topics include the importance of practicing good oral health habits and scheduling a dental visit during pregnancy to reduce the risk for tooth decay and gum disease. Additional topics include who to ask for help finding a dentist and who to talk to about the cost of oral health services, including services covered by Medicaid.

**PROTECT YOUR BABY’S SMILE & HEALTH BEFORE AND AFTER BIRTH**

This brochure for pregnant women provides information about oral health care during and after pregnancy and throughout life. It also provides information about dental caries and steps that women can take to protect their infants’ oral health and overall health. Topics include the safety and importance of oral health care during pregnancy, starting oral examinations early, and taking care of oral health at home. Information about accessing oral health care is also included.


**TEXT4BABY**

This resource provides health tips timed to a woman’s stage of pregnancy or an infant’s age. The service enables pregnant women and new mothers to get health information delivered regularly to their mobile phones by text message. Messages focus on topics such as nutrition, safe sleep, breastfeeding, oral health, and tobacco use. The program also connects women to public clinics and support services for prenatal and infant care. Messages are available in English and Spanish. A mobile application is also available.


**TIPS FOR GOOD ORAL HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY**

This tip sheet provides information and resources to help women take care of their oral health during pregnancy. Topics include getting oral health care, practicing good oral hygiene, eating healthy foods, and practicing other healthy behaviors. The tip sheet also encourages women to take care of their infants’ gums and teeth and ask their pediatric care health professional to check their infants’ mouth starting at age 6 months and provide a referral to a dentist for urgent care, if needed. The tip sheet is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


**TWO HEALTHY SMILES: TIPS TO KEEP YOU AND YOUR BABY HEALTHY (REV.)**

This brochure is designed to educate women about the importance of oral hygiene and oral health care during pregnancy. Topics include brushing, flossing, eating healthy foods, and getting dental check-ups and treatment. Additional topics include the impact of hormonal changes during pregnancy on gum health, caring for an infant’s gums and teeth, and finding a dentist. The brochure is available in English and Spanish. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]


**YOUR PREGNANT BODY: GUM AND TEETH CHANGE**

This resource discusses changes to gums and teeth that may occur during pregnancy and what women can do to keep their gums and teeth healthy. Topics include inflamed and infected gums and salivary changes. The resource conveys the importance of keeping teeth and gums clean, being gentle with teeth and gums, cutting down on sweets, getting regular oral health care, not delaying dental treatment until after delivery, and when to schedule a dental appointment.


**State and Local Program Reports**

**2015 WISCONSIN PERINATAL-INFANT ORAL HEALTH SUMMIT: SUMMARY REPORT AND STATEWIDE PLAN**

This report summarizes information from a summit held on September 9, 2015, to brainstorm strategies for improving oral health for pregnant women and infants in Wisconsin. The report describes five themes supported by both oral health communities and overall health communities: reimbursements and insurance availability, coordination and integration, training, awareness, and scope of practice. Contents include a statewide plan (objectives and activities) to reduce the prevalence of oral disease among pregnant women and infants who are underserved by integrating high-quality oral health care into the health-care-delivery system.


**HEALTHY SMILES FOR MOM AND BABY “PROMISING PRACTICE”: JEFFERSON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND THE COMMUNITY DENTAL CLINIC**

This resource describes a promising practice for integrating oral health into the primary-health-care-delivery system by creating a formal referral process between local public health departments and oral health professionals. Topics include inputs, activities, aims and measures, impact, collaboration and integration, sustainability, and lessons learned. Information about priority scheduling for pregnant women, providing oral health messages, and participation and coverage during pregnancy is included. [Funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau]

**INDEPENDENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING IN THE HUSKY PROGRAM: ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SCARCE STATE DOLLARS**

This document reports on aspects of Connecticut’s publicly funded HUSKY Program performance and quality based on findings from independent performance monitoring. Topics include continuity of health insurance coverage and enrollment changes, maternal health and birth outcomes for new families, enrollment and preventive health services use in early childhood, trends in health services access and use, the impact of a federally funded project on maternal and infant oral health services, and data-quality improvement.


**PAY FOR PREVENTION: ORAL HEALTH SERVICES AT NH WIC**

This poster describes a partnership between the state oral health program, public health dental hygienists, and WIC staff at three sites in New Hampshire to provide on-site preventive oral health services to pregnant women and children enrolled in WIC. Topics include background on clinical needs, barriers to care, current research, project services, project costs, and first-year findings. Next steps are also discussed, including evaluating project sustainability and completing the final report, training staff to conduct a return-on-investment analysis to demonstrate value, and seeking funding to extend data collection on oral health outcomes of WIC clients.

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Oral Health Program. 2015. *Pay
A SUMMARY OF THE 2013 MICHIGAN PERINATAL ORAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

This report summarizes a conference held on August 7–8, 2013, in Okemos, MI, to address the oral health needs of pregnant women and infants. Contents include an overview of the conference presentations and discussions and a draft action plan. Presentation topics include the Michigan landscape, federal priorities, and state efforts to develop perinatal oral health care guidelines. The draft action plan outlines objectives identified by conference participants as the guiding principles for program planning and policy development.

Organizations
The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) works to achieve optimal oral health for all children and adolescents, including those with special health care needs. AAPD serves primary care and specialty pediatric dentists, as well as general dentists who treat children and adolescents in their practices.

The American Dental Association (ADA) provides oral health information to dentists and consumers and works to advance the dental profession at the national, state, and local levels. ADA initiatives include those related to advocacy, education, research, and the development of standards.

The American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA) works to ensure access to high-quality oral health care; promote dental hygiene education, licensure, practice, and research; and represent the legislative interests of dental hygienists at the local, state, and federal levels. ADHA serves dental hygienists with the goal of helping them achieve their full potential as they seek to improve the public’s oral health.

The Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors promotes the establishment of national dental public health policy, assists state oral health programs in the development and implementation of programs and policies for preventing oral disease, builds awareness and strengthens public health professionals’ knowledge and skills by developing position papers and policy statements, provides information on oral health to health officials and policymakers, and conducts conferences for the dental public health community.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) works to combat disease and supports communities and citizens to do the same. CDC’s Division of Oral Health strives to improve oral health and reduce oral health disparities by helping states improve their oral health programs, extending the use of proven strategies to prevent oral disease, enhancing efforts to monitor oral disease, contributing to the scientific knowledge base related to oral health and oral disease, and guiding infection control in dentistry.
information and materials to promote sustainable oral health services for the MCH population.

**ORAL HEALTH AMERICA**
180 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1150
Chicago, IL 60611-4211
Telephone: (312) 836-9900
Fax: (312) 836-9986
E-mail: info@oralhealthamerica.org
Website: http://www.oralhealthamerica.org

Oral Health America connects communities with resources to drive access to care, increase health literacy, and advocate for policies that improve overall health through better oral health for all Americans, including those who are most vulnerable.

**INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE**
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857
Website: https://www.ihs.gov/index.cfm
Dental portal: https://www.ihs.gov/DOH

The Indian Health Service (IHS) is responsible for providing federal health services, including oral health services, to American Indians and Alaska Natives. The IHS dental portal serves as a centralized location where staff who work in Indian health care can locate resources to support the operation of effective clinical and community oral health programs.

**MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH BUREAU**
Health Resources and Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Parklawn Building
Rockville, MD 20857
Telephone: (301) 443-2753
E-mail: pvodicka@hrsa.gov
Website: http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau provides leadership, in partnership with stakeholders, to improve the physical, mental, and oral health; safety; and well-being of the maternal and child health population, which includes all women, infants, children, and adolescents and their families.

**NATIONAL MATERNAL AND CHILD ORAL HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER**
Georgetown University
Box 571272
Washington, DC 20057-1272
Telephone: (202) 784-9771
E-mail: OHRCinfo@georgetown.edu
Website: http://www.mchoralhealth.org

The National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center responds to the needs of professionals working in states and communities with the goal of improving oral health services for pregnant women, infants, children, and adolescents, including those with special health care needs, and their families (MCH population). The resource center collaborates with government agencies, professional associations, foundations, policy and research centers, and voluntary organizations to gather, develop, and share
Materials Produced by the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center

- **Bright Futures: Oral Health—Pocket Guide** (3rd ed.)
  https://www.mchoralhealth.org/pocket/index.php

- **Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: A National Consensus Statement**
  http://mchoralhealth.org/materials/consensus_statement.php

- **Guidance for Oral Health Professionals**
  https://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/handout-oral-health-professionals.pdf

- **Guidance for Prenatal Care Health Professionals**

- **Pharmacological Considerations for Pregnant Women**

- **Tips for Good Oral Health During Pregnancy**
  Available in Arabic, Chinese, English, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese

  Arabic: https://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/Handout_PregnantWomen_Arabic.pdf


  Russian: https://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/Handout_PregnantWomen_Russian.pdf


- **Promoting Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: An Update on Activities**
  https://www.mchoralhealth.org/materials/consensus_statement.php
Taking care of your mouth while you are pregnant is important for you and your baby. Brushing, flossing, eating healthy foods, and getting dental checkups and treatment will help keep you and your baby healthy.

Changes to your body when you are pregnant can make your gums sore, puffy, and red if you do not brush and floss every day. This problem is called gingivitis (gin-gih-vi-tis). If gingivitis is not treated, it may lead to periodontal (pear-e-oh-don-tuhl) disease. This disease can cause tooth loss.

After your baby is born, take care of your baby’s gums and teeth too. Give your baby a healthy start! Here are tips to keep you and your baby’s teeth and gums healthy.

**While You Are Pregnant**

**Brush and Floss**
- Use a soft toothbrush.
- Floss at least once a day or as often as comfortably possible.
- Rinse your mouth with saliva or a mouthwash if you cannot brush your teeth.

**Eat Healthy Foods**
- Eat fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products like bread or crackers, and dairy products like milk, yogurt, or cheese. Lean meats, fish, chicken, eggs, beans, and nuts are also good choices. Eat foods that have sugar at mealtimes only.
- Drink water or low-fat milk instead of juice, fruit-flavored drinks, or pop (soda).
- Drink water at least a few times a day, especially between meals and snacks.
- Eat fewer sweets like candy, cookies, or cake. Drink fewer sugary drinks like fruit-flavored drinks or pop (soda). Eat sweets or drink sugary drinks at mealtimes only.
- Look for products, like chewing gum or mints, that contain xylitol (zy-lih-tohl).

**Get Dental Care**
- Get a dental checkup. It is safe to have dental care when you are pregnant. Do not put it off until after you have the baby.