



# Improving Infant Health

A Low Birthweight Prevention Initiative  
September 2016

Volume 8

## Keeping your Smile Healthy and Beautiful

During your pregnancy, it is important to keep your teeth and gums as healthy as possible.

While pregnant, it is safe to have routine dental x-rays and examinations to determine your oral health status. Your dental healthcare provider can let you know what type of treatment you need and give you information about how to have healthy teeth and gums for life! It is commonly believed that when pregnant, the mother loses all of the calcium in her teeth to the baby. This is not true. Generally, lack of proper homecare is the cause of many problems with the teeth during and after pregnancy, not the pregnancy or the baby.

There is some evidence suggesting oral health, particularly gum disease, may have an impact on the occurrence of preterm births, resulting in low birth weight babies. The exact connection between poor oral health and preterm birth is unknown. However, it is essential to treat gum disease with effective methods to reduce the risk of low birth weight babies.

Since studies have shown the increased risk, the Georgia Medicaid providers have expanded dental care for pregnant women to include deep cleanings for mothers-to-be who are diagnosed with active gum disease.

Please visit your dental healthcare provider to discuss your oral health during pregnancy.



## Dental Caries in Young Children



Tooth decay is a bacterial infection. Infants aren't born with the bacteria that cause decay. Most acquire these bacteria from their mothers before their third birthday. Common ways to transmit these bacteria are:

- Kissing
- Sharing utensils
- Cleaning off a pacifier with your mouth
- An infant putting his or her hand in your mouth

If you are pregnant and have cavities, you can reduce your child's risk of developing early tooth decay by improving your own oral health. This can greatly reduce the number of cavity-causing bacteria in your mouth and reduce the chance that you will spread them to your child. Here are some important steps you can take:

- See a dentist for treatment of all untreated cavities.
- Brush and floss daily.
- Use products, such as chewing gum and mints, that contain xylitol.

Mothers with active tooth decay will have more decay-causing bacteria. Therefore, their children are more likely to acquire them early in life. They are also more likely to get tooth decay.

So take care of your smile and help prevent your child from having cavities. Kiss and cuddle with your child every day and help them grow up to be healthy and have a beautiful smile!

## Important numbers to know:



District 4 Public Health (706) 845-4035  
WIC Call Center 1-866-636-7942  
Georgia Quit line 1-877-270-STOP  
Prevent Child Abuse GA 1-800-CHILDREN  
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies (770) 451-0020

### *Save the Date*

#### **Health Fair**

September 14, 8AM – 5PM,  
Civic Center, Barnesville, GA

#### **Youth Expo**

October 8, 3 – 5 PM,  
Miles Wimberly Park, Barnesville, GA

#### **Georgia Family Connection**

#### **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference**

October 12-14, Jekyll Island, For more information,  
[www.gafcp.org](http://www.gafcp.org)

#### **West Central Georgia Community Transformation Collective**

October 21, 10 AM – 2 PM –Newnan location TBD  
For more information, call 678-764-6297 or contact  
your local Family Connection Coordinator

#### **Community Resource Fair – “Trunk or Treat”**

October 31, 6:30-8 PM,  
Covered Arena, Franklin, GA

#### **Healthy Women Symposium**

November 16, 10 AM – Noon,  
Gordon College, Barnesville, GA

For more information on the **Low Birthweight Initiative**  
in your community, please contact:

#### **Heard County**

P.O. Box 92  
Franklin, GA 30217  
heardcountylowbirthweight@gmail.com  
[www.heard.gafcp.org](http://www.heard.gafcp.org)  
(706) 302-9776

#### **Lamar County**

118 Academy Dr.  
Barnesville, GA 30204  
lamarlbwinitiative@yahoo.com  
[www.facebook.com/LamarCoSteps](http://www.facebook.com/LamarCoSteps)  
[www.lamar.gafcp.org](http://www.lamar.gafcp.org)  
(770) 358-1483

#### **Meriwether County**

17234 Roosevelt Hwy, Bldg. A  
Greenville, GA 30222  
[www.meriwether.gafcp.org](http://www.meriwether.gafcp.org)  
(706) 672-4016

#### **Spalding County**

P.O. Box 701  
Griffin, GA 30224  
spaldingcollaborative@gmail.com  
[www.spalding.gafcp.org](http://www.spalding.gafcp.org)  
(678) 764-6297

#### **Butts County**

P. O. Box 976  
Jackson GA 30233  
buttscountylowbirthweight@gmail.com  
[facebook.com/buttscountylowbirthweight](http://facebook.com/buttscountylowbirthweight)  
[www.butts.gafcp.org](http://www.butts.gafcp.org)  
770-504-2230

For more information about Georgia's Low Birthweight Initiative go to  
[www.gafcp.org/count/LBW](http://www.gafcp.org/count/LBW)

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