

# Women and Tooth Care

Women have special needs when it comes to their oral health. That's because the physical changes they undergo through life-things like menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth, breast-feeding and menopause-cause many changes in the body, some harmful to teeth and gums.

Lesions and ulcers, dry sockets, as well as swollen gums, can sometimes occur during surges in a woman's hormone levels. These periods would be a prime time to visit the dentist. Birth control pills have been shown to increase the risk of gingivitis, and hormone replacement therapy has been shown to cause bleeding and swollen gums. Gum disease can also present a higher risk for premature births.

Some research has shown that women may be more likely to develop dry mouth, eating disorders, jaw problems such as temporomandibular joint disorders, and facial pain-all of which can be difficult from a physical and emotional standpoint.

Taking care of your oral health is essential, and can go a long way to helping you face the physical changes in your body over the years.