



## The Threat of Periodontal Disease in Pregnancy

- What is the most recent evidence regarding pregnancy and periodontal disease, and what should dental teams be doing with this information?
- Do you wish you had evidence-based, sensitive messages to help you discuss with women the risk periodontal disease may pose to healthy pregnancy?
- How can you educate and train physicians, nurses, and midwives to screen pregnant women for periodontal disease and refer suspected cases for dental care?

It is well recognized that infection and inflammation is associated with a significant proportion of adverse pregnancy outcomes, and one of the most common sources of infection and inflammation is periodontitis. It's been estimated that periodontal diseases, including gingivitis, affect 75% of pregnant women.

Periodontal infection has been correlated with such pregnancy complications as preterm birth, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, and delivery of small-for-gestational age infants.

Oral healthcare providers who care for women of child-bearing age should be aware of the evidence that supports the possibility that periodontal infection may be a modifiable risk factor for adverse pregnancy outcomes.

This case-based course empowers oral healthcare providers to incorporate into everyday patient care evidence of the relationship between periodontal disease and risk for adverse pregnancy outcomes.



**Suggested Audience:** Dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, business staff

**Suggested Length:** 3 hours



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Explain how the structure and integrity of gingival tissues change during pregnancy
- Describe the evidence supporting a relationship between periodontal disease and adverse pregnancy outcomes
- Cite the risk factors for preterm birth and preeclampsia
- Express patient-appropriate messages to educate women of child-bearing age about the importance of oral health and the potential impact of periodontal disease on pregnancy
- Summarize the findings of various consensus opinions related to the oral healthcare of pregnant women
- Identify pregnant women who have oral health problems that may place them at greater risk for an adverse pregnancy outcome and communicate concerns to the patient's physician
- Educate and train physicians, nurses, and midwives to screen pregnant women for periodontal disease and refer suspected cases for dental care



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