

# Caring for your teeth while pregnant

## There is no shame in having problems with your teeth during pregnancy

The hormones that help your pregnancy affect your gums and teeth.

- Your teeth might feel loose and your gums might bleed more often.
- Cravings for sweet and sour things can put your teeth at risk of decay.
- Morning sickness can erode your tooth enamel.

## Severe gum disease has been linked to Boorai being born too early and too small

- Treating tooth decay in pregnancy reduces the decay causing bacteria you can pass onto your boorai.
- Your midwife or Aboriginal Health Worker can support you to make a dental appointment and can advise if you are eligible for free or low cost dental treatment.

## Remember to clean well

- Even if your gums bleed, continue to brush your teeth and gums twice a day, after breakfast and before bed at night.
- Use a toothbrush with a soft small head with a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- If you have morning sickness, rinse your mouth with tap water and rub toothpaste onto your teeth with your finger. Wait 30 minutes before brushing your teeth. Brushing teeth straight after vomiting rubs acid into the teeth and weakens the enamel.



Artwork by Aboriginal artist, Shakara Montalto



dental health  
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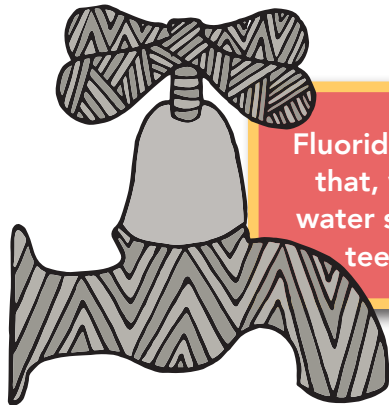


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## Keeping your teeth and gums healthy during pregnancy is important

### Drink well

- Drink plenty of tap water which can have fluoride for strong teeth.
- Drink plain milk as the calcium in milk is good for your teeth and your boorai's teeth and bones.
- Limit sugary drinks as they weaken tooth enamel and causes decay.



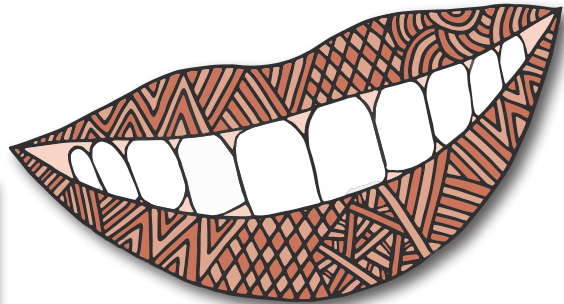
Fluoride is a natural mineral that, when added to our water supply, helps protect teeth against decay.

### Eat well

- Food cravings in pregnancy are common, but remember to limit sweet foods.
- Eat a variety of fresh foods from the five food groups.

### Clean well

- Brush teeth morning and night after meals.



### Smoking

- Smoking and drinking alcohol in pregnancy is harmful to your gums, teeth and boorai.

### For extra support talk to:

- an Aboriginal Health Worker
  - a Koori Maternity Services Midwife
  - your Doctor
  - the Aboriginal Quitline 13 78 48
- or visit Dental Health Services Victoria at [www.dhsv.gov.au](http://www.dhsv.gov.au)



## Your dental appointment

Date  Time

Address

Phone

Always phone the dental service if you cannot make the appointment.