

## It is common for a future mom's tooth and gum health to get worse during pregnancy.<sup>1</sup>

Research continues to show a link between periodontal disease and preterm deliveries. In a recent study by the University of Pennsylvania, women with periodontal disease had a 16.2% higher chance of having preterm deliveries compared to women without periodontal disease. The study also showed that women who had notable periodontal treatments during their pregnancies had much lower rates of preterm births.<sup>2</sup>

### What is periodontal disease



Periodontal disease, also known as gum disease, is an infection of the tissues that hold your teeth in place. It is typically caused by poor brushing and flossing habits that allow plaque—a sticky film of bacteria—to build up on the teeth and harden. In advanced stages, periodontal disease can lead to sore, bleeding gums; painful chewing problems; and even tooth loss.<sup>3</sup> All infections are cause for concern among pregnant women because they could be a risk to the health of the baby.

To ask for supportive aids and services, or materials in other formats and languages for free, please call, 1-877-860-2837 TTY/TDD: 711.

<sup>1</sup>American Academy of Pediatrics

<sup>2</sup>American Association of Dental Research, March 5, 2010 Press Release. [aadronline.org](http://aadronline.org).

<sup>3</sup>National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

<sup>4</sup>American Dental Association

DentaQuest is an independent company that provides dental benefits for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois.

If you have any questions, please call Member Services at 1-877-860-2837 (TTY/TTD: 711). We are available 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-877-860-2837 (TTY/TDD: 711).

UWAGA: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer 1-877-860-2837 (TTY/TDD: 711).

Illinois Client Enrollment Services will send you information about your health plan choices when it is time for you to make a health plan choice and during your Open Enrollment period.

Blue Cross Community Health Plans is provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company (HCSC), an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



## Periodontal Disease & Pregnancy

Maintain a healthy smile with Blue Cross Community Health Plans benefits.

## Pregnancy gingivitis



Gingivitis is a mild form of gum disease. Your mouth can be affected by the hormonal changes you will have during pregnancy. Some women will get a condition known as pregnancy gingivitis. This is an inflammation of the gums that can cause swelling and tenderness. Left untreated, gingivitis can lead to worse forms of gum disease.<sup>4</sup>

## Are you at risk?



Many people do not know they have gum disease, and may not have symptoms until the disease is at the worst stage. Here are signs to look for:

- Red and swollen gums
- Bleeding gums while brushing or flossing
- Loose or separating teeth
- Bad breath

Talk to your dentist about the risks of periodontal disease.



## Prevention is easy



The good news is that, in its mildest form, periodontal disease can be prevented with dental care and a good daily oral routine. Here are some ways you can help prevent periodontal disease:

- Brush after each meal
- Floss at least once a day
- Eat a healthy diet
- Do not eat sticky, sugary snacks
- Visit your dentist routinely
- Do not use tobacco products

Pregnancy and welcoming a newborn baby are two of the most exciting times in your life. It is also a time to focus on your dental care as an expectant mother and to start care before your baby is born.

## How do members enroll in dental services?



Blue Cross Community Health Plans members should use DentaQuest® providers for dental services. You do not need an OK from your doctor for dental services.

To find an in-network dental provider, you can:

- Call DentaQuest at **1-888-291-3763**.
- Call Member Services at **1-877-860-2837** (TTY/TTD: **711**).
- Visit our website at <http://www.bcchpil.com>.

## Which services are covered by the plan?



The plan covers these dental services:

- Oral exams
- Teeth cleanings
- Fillings
- Crowns
- Some root canals
- Some dentures
- Some oral surgeries
- Some emergency dental services
- Fluoride treatments for children
- Extractions

Some limits apply to routine dentistry above.

Eligible pregnant members can get these dental services before their babies are born:

- Periodic oral exams
- Deep teeth cleanings
- Periodontal work

For members with special needs, we cover practice visits to the dentist.

## Which services are not covered by the plan?



This plan does not cover some dental services, such as:

- Cosmetic dentistry
- Tooth bleaching and whitening
- Implants

For more information about your benefits, contact Member Services or read the Blue Cross Community Health Plans Member Handbook. Limitations and restrictions may apply.