

# Take care of your mouth

# Take care of you and your baby



1

**Brush your teeth  
2 times each day  
with a fluoride  
toothpaste**

**WHY?** Because the children of mothers with untreated cavities or missing teeth are over 3 times more likely to have cavities as a child. Brushing regularly with a fluoride toothpaste reduces cavity-causing germs in your mouth — making you less likely to pass on these germs to your newborn.



2

**Drink plenty of  
tap water**

**WHY?** Dehydration happens when your body loses water faster than it takes in water. It's more common during pregnancy, and severe dehydration could harm your health and your pregnancy. The healthiest water to drink is tap water. Most North Dakota cities and towns provide tap water with the right amount of fluoride to help protect teeth from cavities.



3

**Visit a dentist  
during your  
pregnancy**

**WHY?** It's important and safe to visit a dentist to have your teeth cleaned, get an x-ray or get treatment for a cavity. Your dental office also can recommend ways to keep your gums healthy. Most pregnant women have gingivitis, an early stage of gum disease that leaves gums red and swollen. Research shows there may be a link between gum disease and birth complications, including low birthweight babies and pre-term births.



4

**Don't "clean" a  
dropped pacifier  
with your saliva**

**WHY?** Babies are not born with the germs (bacteria) that cause tooth decay. When a parent "cleans" a dropped pacifier with their own saliva or shares a spoon with their baby, they can accidentally expose them to their cavity-causing germs.