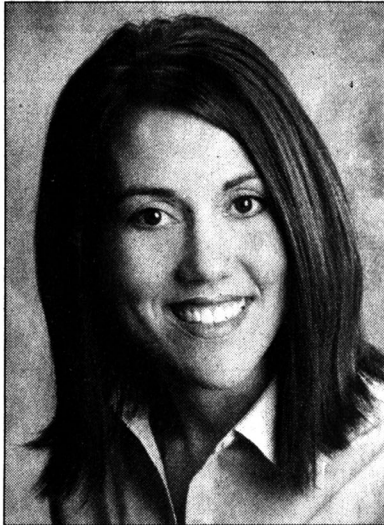


Oral Hygiene for Girls and Women; What You Need To Know

Lata Stefano, D.D.S. and owner of Lata Stefano, D.D.S., Inc. general dentistry practice in Sandusky, highlights that women can have specific concerns and care when it comes to good oral hygiene at different times of their life. Here's what to look for:



1. SWOLLEN GUMS-With the onset of puberty and the surge of hormones that follows, swollen gums can occur. Girls may experience sensitive gums that react more to irritants.

2. MEDICATIONS-Diet pills and certain medications (over-the-counter and prescription) can cause a decrease in salivary flow resulting in dry mouth. This puts one at higher risk for cavities, gum disease and discomfort.

3. MENSTRUATION-Menstruation may also cause swollen gums and/or mouth sores. This is again due to the influx of hormones.

4. SMOKING-Smoking as well as the other risks that are known, is associated with an increase risk in gum disease.

5. BIRTH WEIGHT-Research suggests a link between pre-term or low-birth weights babies and gum disease. Excess bacteria, it has been suggested, can enter the bloodstream triggering the production of chemicals called prostaglandins that can induce premature labor.

6. PREGNANCY-Pregnancy gingivitis is a condition of red and swollen gums that are prone to bleeding. This can be controlled with excellent oral hygiene, regular dental

examinations and professional cleanings. An oral exam is recommended if you're thinking about getting pregnant to catch any conditions early. Pregnancy tumors are bumps on the gums that clear up after pregnancy, but sometimes have to be treated during pregnancy. This is another reason for regular preventive visits.

7. X-RAYS-NON-EMERGENCY PROCEDURES SHOULD BE AVOIDED DURING PREGNANCY.

The best time for a procedure, if needed, is between the fourth and sixth months of pregnancy. A dental emergency that causes severe pain can be treated anytime, but the obstetrician should be consulted during an emergency that requires anesthesia or medications. X-rays should only be taken in an emergency situation. Anything elective should wait until after the baby is born.

8. BIRTH CONTROL-The birth control pill can mimic pregnancy because of the progesterone and estrogen levels. Gingivitis can result from this also. In addition, it has been found that women on oral contraceptives are twice as likely to get a dry socket after a tooth extraction. It's important to let your dentist know all the medications you are taking.

9. OSTEOPOROSIS-Osteoporosis is becoming more common in women. Early detection can be seen in the mouth. Dental x-rays can reveal the density of the jawbone around the teeth as well as the remaining part of the jaw. A dentist can refer you to

your physician if any abnormality is seen.

10. MEDICAL CONDITIONS-Bulimia can cause erosion on the backside of the upper-front teeth due to stomach acid from vomiting. Sores at the corners of the mouth can also occur with bulimia.

For questions about the article or for more information about Lata Stefano, D.D.S. Inc., visit the website at www.stefanodental.com or call 419-626-2205

Dr. Lata Stefano has been practicing dentistry for over a decade and graduated from The Ohio State University College of Dentistry. She completed her Advanced Education in General Dentistry Residency at Case Western Reserve

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Firelands Appoints New Director of Education Services



Firelands Regional Medical Center has announced that Connie Dagg, RN, BSN, has accepted the position of Director of Education Services. In her new role, Dagg is responsible for the design, development and implementation of professional development for Firelands Regional Medical Center employees.

Dagg has been a registered nurse for 24 years with experience in critical care, maternal and child care, nurse recruitment and staff development. She earned a diploma from Providence Hospital School of Nursing; a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Bowling Green State University; is certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center in Nursing Professional Development and is currently enrolled in the Lourdes College Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program. Connie Dagg has been with Firelands Regional Medical Center for 23 years. She resides in Fremont with her husband