

Women's Health & Your Teeth: How Hormones Affect Your Oral Health

News

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When it comes to oral health, most people think of brushing, flossing, and regular dental checkups. But did you know that your hormones play a major role in the health of your teeth and gums? From puberty to pregnancy to menopause, hormonal fluctuations can impact everything from gum sensitivity to the risk of cavities. Here's what every woman should know about how hormones affect oral health—and what you can do to keep your smile strong through every stage of life.

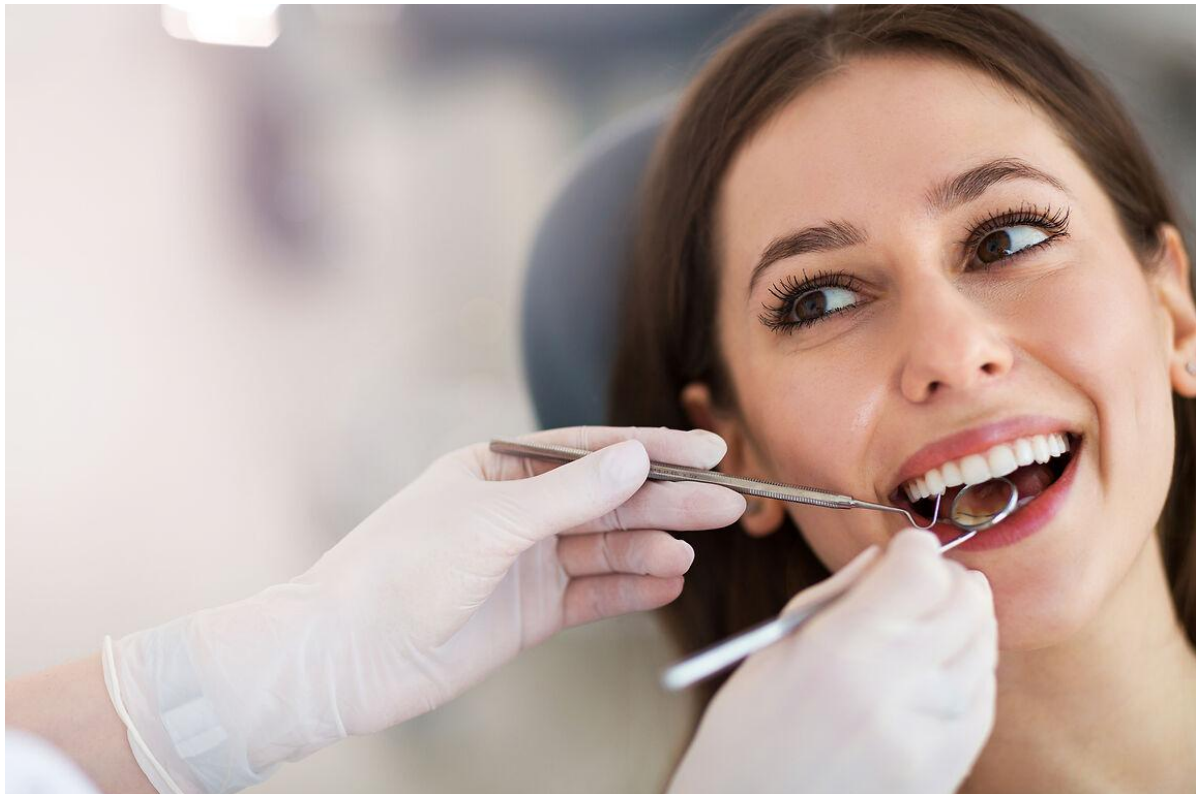


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Puberty: The First Signs of Hormonal Changes in Oral Health

As young girls go through puberty, the surge in estrogen and progesterone can lead to increased blood flow to the gums, making them more sensitive and prone to swelling. This can result in puberty gingivitis, a condition where the gums become red and swollen and may bleed during brushing or flossing.

How to Care for Your Smile During Puberty:

- Brush and floss daily to prevent plaque buildup.
- Use an antibacterial mouthwash to reduce bacteria.
- See a dentist regularly to monitor any gum changes.

Menstrual Cycle: Monthly Changes You Might Not Expect

Fluctuating hormone levels throughout the menstrual cycle can also impact oral health. Some women experience swollen gums, mouth sores, or even increased sensitivity to hot and cold foods around their period.

Common Menstrual Cycle-Related Dental Issues:

- **Menstrual gingivitis** – temporary gum inflammation that occurs before your period.
- **Mouth sores** – some women experience canker sores due to hormonal shifts.
- **Increased plaque buildup** – hormonal changes can lead to a greater risk of bacterial growth.

How to Protect Your Teeth During Your Cycle:

- Stick to your regular oral hygiene routine, even when feeling fatigued.
- Opt for a soft-bristled toothbrush if your gums feel sensitive.

- Drink plenty of water to keep your mouth hydrated and reduce bacteria.

Pregnancy: A Critical Time for Oral Health

Pregnancy causes major hormonal shifts, increasing estrogen and progesterone levels, which can lead to pregnancy gingivitis—red, swollen gums that bleed easily. Pregnant women are also more susceptible to pregnancy tumors (noncancerous overgrowths on the gums) and an increased risk of cavities due to morning sickness and cravings for sugary foods.

Oral Health Tips for Expecting Moms:

- Schedule a dental checkup early in your pregnancy to address any concerns.
- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and floss daily.
- Rinse your mouth with water after morning sickness to prevent acid erosion.
- Choose nutritious snacks like dairy and leafy greens for stronger teeth.

Menopause: How It Impacts Your Smile

As estrogen levels decline during menopause, many women experience dry mouth (xerostomia), which increases the risk of cavities and gum disease. Bone loss is also a concern, as decreased estrogen can lead to osteoporosis, affecting the jawbone and contributing to tooth loss.

How to Keep Your Smile Strong During Menopause:

- Stay hydrated to combat dry mouth.
- Chew sugar-free gum or use saliva substitutes if dry mouth persists.
- Eat calcium-rich foods and consider supplements for bone health.

- Visit your dentist regularly to monitor for gum disease and bone loss.

Hormones affect far more than just mood and energy levels—they play a crucial role in oral health at every stage of life. By staying proactive with dental care and working with your dentist to address hormonal changes, you can keep your smile healthy and strong through every phase of womanhood.

Would you like a personalized consultation on how your hormones may be impacting your oral health? Reach out to **Dr. Mimi Yeung** at **M.Y. Dental Spa** in New York, New York, for expert care and personalized dental solutions. Book an appointment today to keep your smile healthy through every stage of life!