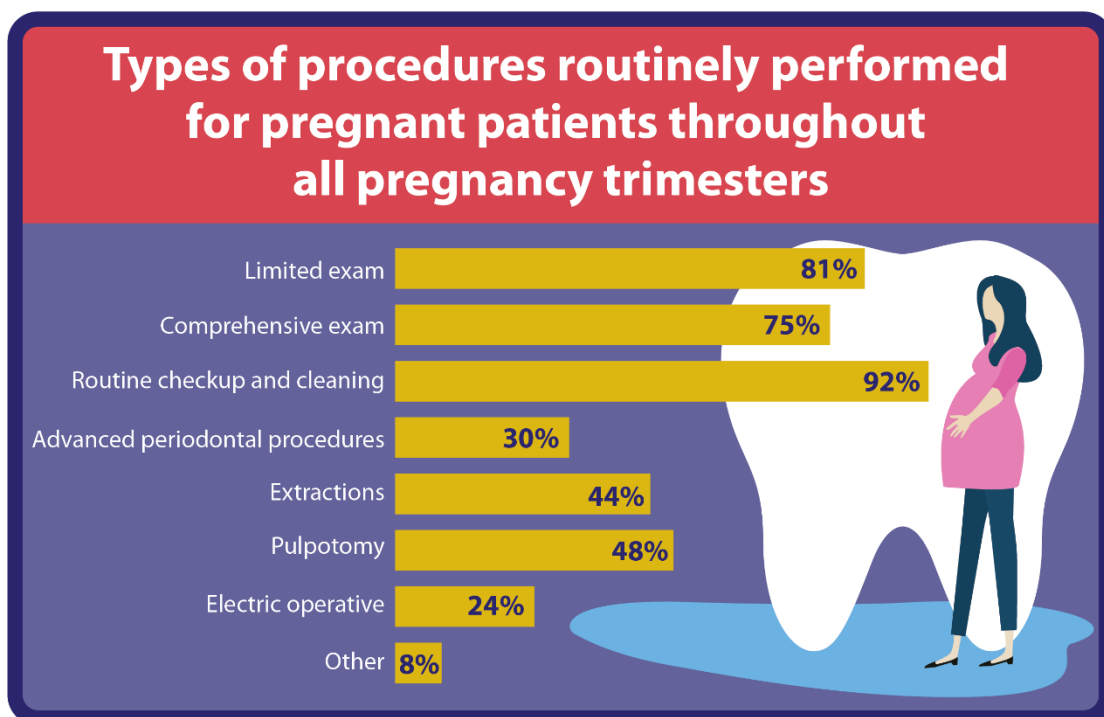


Quick Poll Results: Dental Treatment During Pregnancy

Our September Quick Poll found that some Network members won't provide certain treatments to pregnant women that prenatal oral health care guidelines approve. Being pregnant puts a woman at a higher risk for gum disease and dental cavities. In the United States, more than 40% of pregnant women don't see a dentist.

Of the 526 poll respondents, about three-fourths said they would do a comprehensive oral health exam during pregnancy. However, less than half said they would routinely provide emergency treatment to pregnant women, including extractions and other invasive procedures. Some practitioners said they require medical clearance from the patient's doctor.

About 18% of practitioners said they wouldn't do x-rays for pregnant women at any time during the pregnancy. About 46% do x-rays during the first trimester, and 70% to 73% do them during the second and third trimester as needed. With few exceptions, the radiation dose from x-rays won't harm the fetus, according to 2017 Guidelines for Diagnostic Imaging During Pregnancy and Lactation. Most respondents (86%) generally see 1 to 10 pregnant women per month. About 60% of the respondents said that only up to one-fourth of their pregnant patients have a dental emergency (not including dental trauma). About 10% of the practitioners said that more than a quarter of their pregnant patients had a dental emergency.





Preventive, diagnostic, and restorative dental treatment is safe throughout pregnancy, according to a consensus statement developed in 2012 at the Oral Health Care During Pregnancy Consensus Development Expert Workgroup Meeting (see reference below). It's safe to provide emergency or acute care at any time during the pregnancy, as needed.

Treating a pregnant woman is a great opportunity to provide her with information about infants' oral health care. However, 25% of respondents aren't educating their pregnant patients. About 67% of respondents educate their patients in person, and others use flyers or other methods.

Prenatal oral health care guidelines:

- [Oral Health Care During Pregnancy and Early Childhood Practice Guidelines](#). New York State Department of Health. 2006.
- [Oral Health Care During Pregnancy Expert Workgroup. 2012. Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: A National Consensus Statement](#). Washington, DC: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center.
- [Committee Opinion No. 723: Guidelines for Diagnostic Imaging During Pregnancy and Lactation](#). Committee on Obstetric Practice. *Obstetrics and Gynecology*. 2017;130(4):e210-e216.

To continue the conversation about dental care during pregnancy, please visit the Quick Polls Results thread in the [Member Forum](#).