

Diabetes & Gum Disease

Diabetes and oral health go hand-in-hand:

People with poorly controlled diabetes are more likely to develop gum disease, which in turn can contribute to the progression of diabetes.

Gum disease, also referred to as periodontal disease, is a largely preventable condition where the bacteria in plaque causes inflammation and destruction of the gums and supporting bone.¹ Gingivitis is a mild form of gum disease, which, if left untreated, can progress to periodontitis, a more serious infection. Periodontitis may impact the body's ability to regulate blood sugar, making diabetes more difficult to control.²

Dental care can make a difference

For people with diabetes, getting the proper care at the dentist can lead to improved overall health.⁶ And professional dental care is necessary to diagnose, treat, and/or stop the progression of gum disease.

If you have diabetes:

Schedule regular dental visits, as your dentist may recommend more frequent cleanings and exams

Inform your dentist of any health conditions, medications, and symptoms

Offer to connect your dental and medical professionals to better coordinate your care

Practice good oral care at home:



Brush teeth at least twice and floss at least once daily – ask your dentist about proper techniques and recommended products



Drink water throughout the day and rinse after eating or drinking other beverages



Avoid using tobacco



Remove and clean dentures daily



Eat a balanced diet, avoiding sugary or starchy snacks and beverages⁹

Did you know?



Approximately
75%
of American
adults have
some form of
gum disease.³

34.2 million
Americans have some
form of diabetes.⁴

1/3 of people
with diabetes
have severe
periodontitis.⁵

Young adults with diabetes have
2x the risk of periodontitis
than those without diabetes.⁵

Brain
(stroke,
cerebrovascular
disease)



Eyes
(diabetic
retinopathy)



Mouth
(tooth decay
and cavities,
gum disease)



Heart
(cardiovascular
disease)



Kidneys
(diabetic
nephropathy)



Nerves
(diabetic
neuropathy)



Sources: 1. Periodontal (Gum) Disease: Causes, Symptoms, and Treatments; National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research; December 2014
2. Impact of Periodontal Therapy on General Health; American Journal of Preventive Medicine; 2014 3. Dispelling Myths About Gum Disease; American Academy of Periodontology; 2010 4. Statistics About Diabetes; American Diabetes Association; July 2017 5. What Dental Professionals Would Like Team Members to Know About Oral Health and Diabetes; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 6. Oral Health and Hygiene; American Diabetes Association, September 2012 7. Diabetes, Gum Disease, and Other Dental Problems; National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, September 2014 8. Diabetes and dental care: Guide to a healthy mouth; Mayo Clinic; September 2015 9. Diabetes and Oral Health Problems; American Diabetes Association; September 2012

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