



The link between oral health and diabetes

More than 34 million people in the U.S. have diabetes. About 7 million of them don't know they have it. And, around 88 million people have prediabetes. This means they are at risk of getting Type 2 diabetes later.¹

Prediabetes means your blood sugar is a little too high, but not high enough to be diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is when your body has trouble using sugar the right way, so sugar builds up in your blood.

So, what does this have to do with your mouth? Studies show a strong link between gum disease and diabetes. People with diabetes are more likely to have gum disease. They may also have a more serious form of it than people without diabetes.²

Anyone can get gum disease. But pregnant women are at higher risk because of hormone changes.^{1,3} They can also get diabetes during pregnancy. This is called gestational diabetes.

Unlike gum disease, diabetes can't always be prevented. That's why it's important to visit the dentist often. Dentists can help people with diabetes take better care of their teeth and gums. Treating gum disease may even help control blood sugar levels.



Did you know?

Over 1 million Americans are told they have diabetes each year.¹



Quick bites

The following tips can help people with diabetes:

- Visit your dentist regularly for cleanings.
- Tell your dentist you have diabetes. Keep them updated on your condition.
- Let your doctor and dentist share contact info in case they need to talk.
- Brush and floss every day. Use mouthwash to help fight bacteria.



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1. American Diabetes Association, "Diabetes Basics," web. 2. Delta Dental Plans Association, "Research Review September 2009. Oral and General Health—Exploring the Connection. Associations Between Periodontal Disease and Diabetes Mellitus," web. 3. American Pregnancy Association, "Pregnancy and Swollen Gums (Also Known as Pregnancy Gingivitis)," web.