



Diabetes and Oral Health

Nearly 26 million Americans have diabetes and an estimated 79 million U.S. adults have pre-diabetes. Seven million Americans don't even know they have this disease! The relationship between diabetes and periodontal disease is two-way. The inflammation of periodontal disease negatively impacts blood glucose control while high blood sugar levels predispose patients to more severe periodontal infections.

Routine dental visits and good oral hygiene habits will help diabetic patients maintain good oral health. Patients with diabetes should know that the time spent caring for their mouths can improve their overall health including other chronic conditions often present with diabetes.

There is growing acceptance among medical professionals that diabetes is associated with increased occurrence and progression of periodontitis—so much so that periodontitis has been called the “sixth complication of diabetes.”

- Periodontal (gum) disease is more common in people with diabetes. Among young adults, those with diabetes have about twice the risk of periodontal disease as those without diabetes.
- Persons with poorly-controlled diabetes are nearly three times more likely to have severe periodontitis than those without diabetes.
- Almost one-third of people with diabetes have severe periodontal disease.
- Talk to your dental provider to be sure you are doing everything possible to achieve your best oral health.
- Tell your medical providers if you have been diagnosed with periodontal disease.

Remember: Periodontal disease is a transmissible, bacterial infection and can be controlled!