

“Diabetes and Gum Disease”

Special Report for Diabetic Patients

DIABETES HEALTH WARNING:

**DIABETICS WITH GUM DISEASE ARE 7X MORE LIKELY TO
DIE FROM HEART AND KIDNEY DISEASE!**

Notice: Whether you have recently been diagnosed with diabetes or have been living with this condition for some time, knowing the important information in this health report may just save your life! Always consult and work with qualified health professionals who understand the diabetic condition! For diabetics – it really is a matter of life and death!

If you have diabetes you may have a *Silent Killer* prowling around in your bloodstream at this very moment – and you may not even know about it! This *Silent Killer* has been linked to heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, kidney disease, high blood pressure, cancer and Alzheimer’s disease – just to name a few.

In fact – research at Harvard and published in The New England Journal of Medicine found that this *Silent Killer* was more predictive of future heart attacks than was cholesterol alone! Now that’s pretty big news! Other research found a 768% increase in deaths from heart problems and kidney disease, in diabetics who had serious periodontal disease!

What is this “*Silent Killer*” that science is just now beginning to understand better – and what are its’ links to oral health?

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This *Silent Killer* is called “systemic inflammation”. This happens when dangerous inflammatory proteins such as C-reactive protein (CRP) and other “cytokines” are created by chronic low-grade infections such as gum disease, and then cause damage to blood vessels, tissues and organ systems throughout the body.

Gum disease contributes to these health problems because of the “spillover” of oral bacteria and inflammatory proteins from unresolved gum infections, which enter the bloodstream through infected gums (e.g. gingivitis) and are carried to the rest of the body. The “Oral-Systemic Connection” is the term now used to describe this link between mouth health and general health.

Diabetics already know about the threats to their health from diabetes. These threats are called “diabetic complications” and include blindness, foot amputations, kidney failure, heart disease, neuropathies, impaired wound healing, and now – periodontal disease. Fortunately, diabetic “oral complications” are now beginning to be addressed by more physicians, dentists and their patients.

“Type 2 diabetics have an increase in death rate from 3.7% to 28.4% (a 768% increase) when comparing diabetics with no gum disease and diabetics with severe gum disease, respectively. Periodontal disease is a strong predictor of death from heart and kidney disease.”

- Diabetes Care 28:27-32, 2005.

For diabetics, this information is especially important. This is because diabetes slows down the healing process. As a consequence, diabetics are more prone to chronic low-grade infections like periodontal disease - and when they have gum disease it tends to be more severe! Also, in a cruel twist of fate, diabetics with gum disease can have a more difficult time managing their blood sugar levels. This quickly becomes a viscous cycle - with diabetes causing more gum disease problems, and gum disease problems creating blood sugar control issues.

Because the new emerging research is showing such a strong relationship between diabetes and oral health, controlling gum disease is gaining new urgency.

Fortunately more and more people are learning about these problems thanks in part to news reports in the media, advertising by companies selling oral health products, health insurance companies educating their customers, and through the efforts of many dentists and doctors.

“C-reactive protein level is a stronger predictor of cardiovascular events than the LDL cholesterol level.”

- NEJM Vol. 347:1557-1565

Some medical insurance companies in fact, are already providing coverage for periodontal treatment to diabetic and heart patients because they see that improved gum health lowers overall costs for other medical care. Also, many informed medical doctors are beginning to

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insist that their diabetic and heart patients see qualified dentists who can diagnose and treat chronic low-grade infections in the mouth.

“Diabetic patients are more likely to develop periodontal disease, which in turn can increase blood sugar and diabetic complications.”

(American Academy of Periodontology)

Consider these facts:

- Diabetics are twice as likely to have gum disease compared to non-diabetics.
- People with diabetes are more prone to oral infections, tooth decay, and tooth loss.
- Gum disease can make it more difficult for diabetics to control their blood sugar levels.
- Diabetics who don't control their blood sugars have more gum disease, and when they have it, it is more severe.
- Diabetics with gum disease have 768% greater chance of dying than diabetics without gum disease.
- Diabetic complications include oral complications in addition to blindness, kidney disease, neuropathies & foot amputations, and heart disease.
- Diabetics have more problems with infections and wound healing.
- Diabetics with good oral health can keep their teeth and reduce their risks of dying.

If you have diabetes, it is essential to perform exquisite daily home care and to have regular professional dental cleanings and evaluations. People with diabetes may require four or more dental cleaning visits each year in order to control gum infections and better manage their blood sugar levels

For people with diabetes, good oral hygiene, proper dental care and the utilization of expert supervision from knowledgeable health professionals are very important considerations. The bottom line is that controlling blood sugars and keeping the mouth free from infection may be a life-saving proposition for diabetics.

Just as all physicians are not equally prepared to help you manage your diabetes, not all dentists are equally trained or experienced with how to manage the many challenging considerations which comes with having diabetes.

Fortunately there are dentists who take a special interest in helping people with diabetes. These dentists understand the unique problems associated with diabetes and will work closely

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with your physician and other health professionals as part of the “diabetic team”.

Special training and modern treatment techniques allow these dentists to better manage difficult oral health problems related to diabetes. This can be important because the treatment needs and general health considerations of people with diabetes often require special handling and extra care.

Having diabetes changes the “rules” for how closely oral health is monitored. Since there is less room for error, careful management and proactive strategies to improve and maintain oral health must always be given top priority.

Make sure that your dentist and hygienist are knowledgeable and mindful of the many unique conditions and situations related to diabetes and oral health, and how to best treat diabetic patients.

For diabetics, taking oral health seriously can be a matter of life and death. Make sure to talk openly and frankly with your dentist about your concerns. And be willing to follow their advice, because your life may depend on it!

(Disclaimer: This information cannot be relied on as medical advice for individual circumstances, nor can it substitute for advice from qualified health professionals. Always consult with your physician, dentist, and/or other health professionals who are experienced with working with diabetic patients.)