



The Mouth-Body Connection

Not only does regular dental care mean a healthier mouth, it may also mean a healthier body

Researchers are discovering more reasons to brush and floss. Recent studies indicate there may be a strong link between the health of your teeth and gums and your overall health.

Disease-causing bacteria, including those that cause gum disease, are believed to travel from the mouth to other parts of your body, potentially putting you at risk for serious medical conditions.

DID YOU KNOW?

- According to some studies, moderate to advanced gum disease may increase a person's risk for heart disease, stroke, and other inflammatory diseases.
- People with uncontrolled diabetes are more prone to gum disease, and studies suggest having gum disease may also make it harder for a person with diabetes to control their blood sugar levels.
- Not only can a mother's untreated cavities increase the risk of cavities for her child, studies also suggest that untreated gum disease may cause a baby to be born early or to be born underweight.

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Your mouth often acts as a window to the rest of your body and can provide clues about your overall health. In addition to helping you maintain good oral health, your dentist may be the first to detect signs of other health issues such as:

- Diabetes
- Eating Disorders
- AIDS
- Cancer of the mouth, tongue or throat
- Anemia

Maintaining good dental health is an important part of your total wellness. Know your risks and take steps for better overall health.

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Important steps to minimize risks for tooth decay and gum disease:

Brushing and flossing and getting professional care on a regular basis are key to preventing gum disease.

- Brush your teeth at least twice a day for two minutes at a time.
- Floss at least once daily to remove bacteria and food from between the teeth and underneath the gums.
- Consider investing in an electric toothbrush.
- Limit sugary snacks and sipping on sodas, sports drinks, and juices with high amounts of sugar and acid (*even some diet sodas are acidic*).
- Visit your dentist on a regular basis for preventive assessment and professional cleanings.
- Share any changes in your overall health with your dentist.