



# Diabetes

# & Dentistry & YOU

## Find Out How Poor Oral Health and Diabetes Form a Sinister Partnership

If there is one thing diabetes teaches us, it is that no part of the diabetic person's health can be taken for granted.

That is true when it comes to the health of your teeth, as well. Poorly controlled blood glucose can trigger gum disease and dental caries in much the same way it triggers heart disease and renal complications. Poor wound healing and hyper-reactive inflammatory response can leave your mouth vulnerable to a host of oral diseases including xerostomia, oral thrush, oral lesions and lichen planus – while speeding the advance of periodontal disease and its effects.

In fact, patients with periodontal disease and poorly controlled diabetes may increase their **risk of alveolar bone loss by 1100%**.

But there may be something **much more sinister at work**

**when it comes to poor oral health and diabetes.**

Individuals who have been diagnosed with diabetes depend on healthy teeth to enable them to eat the healthy, fiber-rich diet they need to maintain target blood glucose counts and reduce excess weight (one of the top three risk factors for diabetes).

### **Of Grave Concern**

Preventive dental care keeps teeth healthy and strong. It also plays a role in systemic health and metabolic control. Diseased tissue, oral infection and associated inflammation may drive glucose levels out of target ranges while periodontal disease contributes to other complications. Research shows that those with **gum disease are 270% more likely to suffer a heart attack.**

Yet according to research by the

### **Clinical Observations Suggest Worsening Cycle of Disease & Control**

*DentistryForDiabetics<sup>SM</sup>* dentists agree (based on clinical observation) that as metabolic control worsens, the complications associated with periodontal disease also worsen.

In turn, the inflammation associated with periodontal disease, further inhibits metabolic control.

**This action and reaction  
creates an ongoing cycle  
of poor control and  
disease.**

American Dental Association, diabetic patients are less likely to see a dentist for preventive care than non-diabetics. When they do see a dentist, those with diabetes are even more unlikely to see a dentist who understands

### **Did you know?**

People with gum disease are 270% more likely to suffer a heart attack than those with healthy gums — an issue that may be compounded by the fact that 2/3 of all people with diabetes die of cardiovascular-related issues.

the complex nature of diabetes and its two-way relationship with oral health.

The reason for these lapses appears to be **lack of awareness – both among patients and the health care community**. According to that same ADA study, when diabetic subjects were asked if they believed their oral health would be better if they did not have diabetes, 81.5% said “no” or they were “not sure”.

And when asked if they had ever been told by a health care professional — including their dentist — that they should take **extra preventive steps** in their oral care and see a dentist more often, a startling **67.7%**



One of the most pervasive and devastating oral diseases for those with diabetes is xerostomia (also called dry mouth). Its effects reach far beyond its immediate, acute symptoms.

If not treated early and regularly, it can act like a lit match poised to ignite a long line of diseases that lead to

## How can oral bacteria damage organs in your body?

According to experts, pathogens involved in gum disease have evolved virulence factors that allow for direct tissue invasion. It is this characteristic that may enable these bacteria to invade other organs of the body and cause damage to them.

What's more. Research also shows that people with diabetes, who have poor to marginal glucose levels, develop periodontal disease 2+ times more often than diabetics who keep their metabolic levels under control.

**said “No”!** All of which points to a disturbing lack of awareness among those professionals, whom patients depend on to treat and inform them.

When you combine reluctance by the patient with a lack of knowledge among that patient's care team, it creates a terrible, preventable, health vulnerability patients cannot afford.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For information about the relationship between oral care and diabetes, visit <http://www.dentistryfordiabetics.com/>

To find a DentistryForDiabetics-certified dentist, visit <http://www.dentistryfordiabetics.com/directory.php>

## Xerostomia Damages Local & Systemic Health

weakened immune response, inflammation, out-of-control glucose levels and even life-threatening complications.

As medication becomes a greater part of the diabetic patient's treatment program, the **risk of developing xerostomia multiplies**, often leading to degeneration of salivary glands. When that occurs, the patient may develop the following complications . . . .

An increase in dental caries as bacteria is not washed away at a satisfactory rate.

Cracked, dry mouth that

leads to painful mouth lesions and difficulty swallowing. This affects the **ability to eat a healthy, natural diet**, as chewing becomes painful and food acids irritate open sores.

Reduction in peptides and digestive enzymes may **impede insulin sensitivity function** and hinder associated glucose management.

## IN SUMMARY

If you have diabetes and are on medication, visit a dentist trained in proper care of patients with diabetes today.

## Diabetes & Health:

24 million Americans currently have diabetes. Another 57 million are at risk of developing it.