

Dental Care

...for people with diabetes

Because people with diabetes have poorly functioning immune systems, they are more susceptible to disease, including oral disease such as gum infections. People with diabetes may also experience decreased saliva flow, which can lead to increased plaque build-up and calculus (tartar) deposits.

Periodontal disease

Periodontal disease is an infection of the gums around the teeth and the deeper tissues that hold the teeth in place. When plaque is not removed effectively from the teeth each day, the bacteria can irritate the gums causing them to look red, swollen and sometimes bleed.

To keep your teeth and gums healthy...

- > Gently brush your teeth twice a day using a small, soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste
- > Spit out the toothpaste, but don't rinse.
- > Clean between your teeth with floss each day. Your dentist can show you how to floss effectively.
- > Visit your dentist regularly, especially if you have mouth ulcers, sores, infections or pain in your teeth or gums.

If you wear dentures...

- > Make sure they are well fitting.
- > Gently brush your gums once a day.
- > Brush your dentures twice a day.
- > Remove your dentures at night and store them in water.

It is also important to...

- > Limit how often you have sugary food and drink.
- > Wear a mouthguard when playing contact sports.
- > Use a chap stick or lip balm with a Sun Protection Factor when outside.
- > Let your dentist know that you have diabetes.
- > Quit smoking – smoking can make gum disease worse so if you are a smoker, try to quit. Your doctor or dentist can help you to quit.

For more information

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