

“You are 3 times more likely to develop severe gum disease if you have type 2 diabetes”

Diabetes and
Oral Health -
Advice and Tips

Diabetes & Oral Health

Ireland will have 233,000 people over 20 years of age with diabetes by 2020 corresponding to a prevalence rate in the population of over 7.5%.

Uncontrolled diabetes where the level of sugar circulating in the blood is higher than normal causes damage throughout the body including the eyes, kidneys, heart, nerves, blood vessels and the mouth.



How can diabetes affect my mouth?

Too much glucose, in your blood from diabetes can cause pain, infection and other problems in your mouth including, dry mouth, burning mouth, oral thrush and periodontal (gum) disease.

How plaque starts early gum disease (Gingivitis)

A plaque biofilm if left undisturbed around the gum margin and if not removed daily releases poison which causes gums to become red, swollen and to bleed.

How gingivitis progresses to periodontitis (Serious gum disease)

Untreated gingivitis in the presence of diabetes progresses more quickly to periodontitis (serious gum disease). The gums fall away from the teeth and form spaces called pockets which become infected with the plaque biofilm.

Relationship between diabetes and periodontitis (Serious gum disease)

A person is three times more likely to develop severe gum disease if they have type 2 diabetes. Untreated gum disease may make blood sugar levels more difficult to control and patients who have comprehensive gum treatment can experience improved diabetic control (reduced HbA1c levels).

Untreated periodontitis (gum) disease may affect your general health

Untreated periodontitis (gum) disease is a chronic inflammatory disease process that releases enzyme like chemicals which may send harmful signals to other parts of the body. Coronary heart disease, preterm low birth weight babies (PTLB), respiratory infections and diabetes, are examples of health conditions that may be affected by the presence of untreated periodontal (gum) disease.

Sources

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Oral Health Tips for People with Diabetes

- Maintain good blood glucose control. This is key to preventing mouth problems.
- Quit smoking; smoking worsens problems including gum disease.
- If you brush and floss daily and attend your dentist regularly, you can improve your diabetes.
- Morning is the optimum time for dental visits as blood sugar is more stable after breakfast.
- Your dentist may contact your doctor to make your dental visits as comfortable as possible.
- Your dentist may refer you to a periodontal (gum) specialist if you have severe gum disease.



For more information on diabetes and oral health visit
www.decaredental.ie/oral-health-zone/oral-health-downloads

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