

You and  
your health



Helping control your diabetes  
can start with a healthy mouth

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# Make regular dental visits a priority

Diabetes has been shown to be adversely affected by gum disease. In addition, diabetics are more likely to develop gum disease. Research shows that oral infections may cause blood sugar to rise and make diabetes more difficult to control.

## How dental health affects diabetes

Diabetes increases your risk of gum disease, cavities, dry mouth, and tooth loss. Gum disease occurs when the tissue around your teeth becomes infected. If left untreated, gum disease can damage the gums and bone around your teeth and eventually may cause tooth loss.

## What can you do?

See a dentist. Make regular dental visits a priority. And if you have diabetes, it's important to tell your dentist, including any medications that you are currently taking. A dentist may be able to recognize early oral health problems that you can't see, and provide appropriate treatment to help slow the progression of the disease.

Practice good dental care every day. Dental care is always important, but even more of a priority if you have diabetes. Healthy gums help prevent bacteria in your mouth from entering your bloodstream, keeping you healthier.

Take an oral health assessment called My Dental IQ<sup>SM</sup> that immediately provides feedback regarding your oral health. You'll receive a personalized action plan with health tips. You can print a copy of your summary to discuss with your dentist at your next visit.

## Tips to help ensure a healthy mouth:

- Use a soft-bristled toothbrush
- Choose toothpaste with fluoride
- Brush for at least two minutes twice a day
- Floss daily
- Watch for signs of periodontal disease such as red, swollen, or tender gums
- Visit a dentist regularly for exams and cleanings

