



Health Spotlight

The Link between Diabetes and Gum Disease

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Gum disease, also called periodontal disease, is the leading cause of adult tooth loss. Its links to heart disease and stroke have been well-publicized. But did you know it's also linked to diabetes?

The Link between Diabetes and Gum Disease

Studies show that people with insufficient blood sugar control seem to develop gum disease more frequently and severely than those who have good management over their diabetes. High glucose levels in saliva promote growth of bacteria that contribute to gum problems. In addition, diabetes slows circulation and reduces the body's resistance to infection, which puts those struggling with it at greater risk for periodontal infections. It is important to note that those diabetics who are also smokers are far more likely to struggle with all types of mouth disease.

Symptoms of Gum Disease

Whether you're diabetic or not, it's important to know the symptoms of gum disease. Here's a partial list:

- Swollen gums that tend to bleed easily
- Gums separating from teeth
- Loose teeth
- Frequent bad breath
- A change in the way teeth fit together, or the way partials or dentures fit

How to Prevent Periodontal Infection

Tips on how to prevent gum disease, particularly as a diabetic:

- Maintain control over your blood sugar levels
- If you smoke, kick the habit
- Stick with your regular dental check-up and cleaning schedule
- Brush and floss every day
- Eat a healthy diet

A Final Word

If you're managing diabetes, be sure to mention it during your next appointment so your dentist can check for any signs of early gum disease (gingivitis). If diagnosed in the early stages gingivitis can be treated and reversed. If treatment is not received, a more serious and advanced stage (periodontitis) may follow, which includes irreversible bone loss.

As always, your health is our primary concern. **Longwood Dental Group** is accepting new patients. If you are due for a check-up and are not seeing a dentist please call us at 617.566.5445 to schedule a New Patient Visit. www.longwood-dental.com