



Sources

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National Institutes of Health: National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse: www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov

Peninsula Institute for Advanced Dental Studies: www.piads.org

WebMD Diabetes Health Management: www.webmd.com

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Diabetes and Oral Health

How effective treatment of periodontal disease can help control your diabetes



Periodontal disease can make your diabetes more severe and can make it difficult for you to control your blood sugar. The sooner your dentist can control the infection, the better your chances are at reducing your blood sugar levels and improving your glycemic control – both of which can lead to reduced complications from diabetes. Of course, you will have to do your part too – maintain good oral health care at home now!

Get a grip on gum disease

Gum disease is linked to diabetic control. Bacteria prosper on sugars – including the sugar linked to diabetes. If your blood sugar levels are out of control, you are more likely to get gum disease more often and more aggressively than those whose blood sugar levels are in control. Your best defense against periodontal disease is keeping your blood sugar levels as normal as possible.

Effective treatment options for diabetics

The American Academy of Periodontology states that periodontal disease is the sixth-leading complication of diabetes, which makes it even more important for you to know your treatment options to maintain good oral health.

Through early detection, your dentist can provide treatment that can help reduce gum disease and nurse your gums back to health, preventing additional bone or tooth loss. According to the American Academy of Periodontology, routine periodontal treatment, sometimes paired with antibiotics, has been shown to help blood sugar levels as well. Treating periodontal disease can help you to manage your blood sugar.

In the early stages of periodontal disease, treatment usually involves scaling and root planing, a routine procedure in which plaque and calculus are removed from the pockets around the tooth and the root surfaces are smoothed, allowing for reattachment of the gums to the tooth.

Surgery may be necessary if your teeth and gums don't respond well to deep cleaning combined with medication. Your dentist may perform gum flap surgery to remove tartar deposits in deep pockets. Your dentist may advise bone or gum tissue grafts in addition to flap surgery. Grafting allows for new growth of bone or gum tissue destroyed by periodontal disease. Guided tissue regeneration, a procedure that can be used with bone grafting, permits the bone and connective tissue to grow back.

The type of treatment you undergo and how often depends on the extent of your periodontal disease.

Statistic: People with poor blood sugar control get gum disease more often and more severely, and they lose more teeth than do persons with good control.

— Health Newsflash

Decisions, decisions, decisions

To help your dentist choose a treatment plan that is right for you, you may want to provide answers to the following questions:

- When were you diagnosed with diabetes?
- What type of diabetes do you have?
- Do you take medication to control your diabetes? If so, what do you take?
- Are you insulin-dependent?
- What is your normal blood sugar level?
- How do you measure your blood sugar level and how often?

Crushing the culprit

Stopping periodontal disease now can save your teeth and gums – and can help keep your diabetes under control. The success of your overall health depends on good oral health.

Please note: Some services may not be covered under your benefit plan. Please refer to your benefit plan document for details concerning benefits, procedures and exclusions.

Statistic: Researchers have found that people with periodontal disease are almost twice as likely to suffer from diabetes as those without periodontal disease.

— Peninsula Institute for Advanced Dental Studies