

Why taking good care of YOUR MOUTH MATTERS.

Understanding the connection between gum disease and diabetes.



Periodontal disease affects blood sugar.

People with diabetes are more likely to have gum disease than those without because diabetics are at a greater risk for infection.¹ And studies show gum disease affects diabetes as well, since gum infections can actually make it harder for people with diabetes to control their blood sugar.¹ Either way, good oral health can be linked to a reduced risk of diabetic complications.

High blood sugar affects oral health.

Research suggests people with diabetes are at a greater risk than non-diabetics for developing oral health problems, like gingivitis (an early stage of gum disease) and periodontitis (serious gum disease) because they're less able to fight gum-invading bacteria.²

If you're unable to control your blood-glucose levels, you're more likely to develop serious gum disease and lose more teeth than non-diabetics. Like all infections, serious gum disease can cause your blood sugar to rise, making your diabetes harder to control.²

Other oral health problems linked to diabetes include thrush, an infection caused by fungus that grows in the mouth; and dry mouth, which can cause soreness, ulcers, infections and cavities.²

Let your dentist know if you're successfully managing your diabetes. And be sure to schedule a periodontal evaluation.

Remember: taking good care of your teeth and gums today means less diabetic complications tomorrow.

Did You Know?

- Gum disease makes it harder for diabetics to control their blood sugar
- Moderate or severe gum disease can lead to higher blood sugar, longer
- You can take Cigna's Periodontal (Gum) Disease Risk Assessment Quiz on Cigna.com (or myCigna.com if you're a Cigna customer) and share the results with your dentist

1. American Academy of Periodontology. (2012, April 18). Gum disease and diabetes. Retrieved from perio.org/consumer/mbc.diabetes.htm
2. American Diabetes Association. *Diabetes and oral health problems*. Retrieved on September 4, 2012 from diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/treatment-and-care/oral-health-and-hygiene/diabetes-and-oral.html

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