



Your Oral Health:

A window to your overall health

The state of your oral health can offer lots of clues about your overall health. Oral health and overall health are more connected than you may realize.

Your oral health is connected to many other health conditions beyond your mouth. Sometimes the first signs of a disease show up in your mouth. In other cases, infections in your mouth, such as gum disease, can cause problems in other areas of your body.

The Connection!

Oral health and possible links to other diseases and conditions

Cardiovascular Disease

Research shows that several types of cardiovascular diseases may be linked to oral health. These include heart disease, clogged arteries, stroke and bacterial endocarditis. Some researchers believe that bacteria from gum disease can enter your bloodstream and travel through out your arteries to your heart, affecting your cardiovascular system. While gum disease seems to be associated with heart disease, more studies are needed before the link can be confirmed.

Pregnancy and Birth

Gum disease has been linked to premature birth. Some research has shown that disease-causing organisms in a pregnant woman's mouth can wind up in the placenta or amniotic fluid, possibly causing premature birth. Unfortunately, treating periodontal disease during pregnancy may be too late, because the infection may have already spread. It is vital to maintain excellent oral health before you get pregnant.

Diabetes

Diabetes can increase your risk of gum disease, cavities, tooth loss, dry mouth, and a variety of oral infections. Conversely, poor oral health can make your diabetes more difficult to control. Infections may cause your blood sugar to rise and require more insulin to keep it under control.

HIV/AIDS

In some cases, one of the first signs of AIDs may appear in your mouth, with severe gum infection. You may also develop persistent white spots or unusual lesions on your tongue or in your mouth.

Osteoporosis

The first stages of bone loss may show up in your teeth and your dentist may be able to spot this on routine dental x-rays. If bone loss worsens from year to year, your dentist can suggest that you discuss the issue with your other health care providers.

Other Conditions

Many other conditions may make their presence known in your mouth before you know anything is wrong. These may include Sjogren's syndrome, certain cancers, eating disorders, and substance abuse.

You're In Control – The GOOD NEWS!

Taking care of your oral health is easy!

1. Commit to see your dentist at minimum every six months
2. Learn – from your dental provider – proper home dental care
3. Practice proper home care – make it a regular part of your day
4. Talk with your dentist about your role in your dental health – and act on her/his actions
5. Don't smoke
6. Limit intake of sodas, sports drinks and other acidic/sugary drinks
7. Floss your teeth – and brush properly

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For more information about your oral health please call our office 828-274-3882 or visit our website www.ashevilledentalcare.com