A Healthy Mouth
for a Healthy Life

CERTAIN CONDITIONS PUT YOUR ORAL HEALTH AT RISK, BUT YOU CAN TAKE CONTROL

Did you know diabetes and heart disease are linked to oral health? Research shows that a healthy mouth can help you live a healthier life.

Take good care of your teeth and gums - it might help you control your blood sugar in the long run.

ORAL HEALTH AND DIABETES

People living with diabetes need to take special care with their teeth and gums.

Did you know people with diabetes are more likely to develop gum infections? Gum infections increase your likelihood of tooth decay, gingivitis and periodontal disease.

If you have diabetes, a combination of higher blood sugar levels and "dry mouth" makes it difficult for your body to fight the bacteria that causes gum infections. This can lead to a cycle of higher blood sugar and other infections that are tough to heal.

Take good care of your oral health - it may help you have a healthier baby.

EXPECTANT MOTHERS NEED GOOD ORAL HEALTH CARE

Did you know a woman with periodontal disease is nearly eight times more likely to have a pre-term delivery?

Good oral health care is important for expectant mothers. Bacteria from gum disease can lead to premature babies - and increase the expectant mother's chances of developing toxemia.

What to Tell Your Dentist
If you are pregnant, let your dentist know. You shouldn't have X-rays. But, you should still keep your regular cleaning appointment to avoid developing gum disease.

TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR ORAL HEALTH

We've put together a checklist you can use to ensure you're taking good care of your teeth and mouth.

- Visit your dentist for regular checkups.

- See your dentist every six months.

- Talk with your dentist about steps you should take to keep your mouth healthy.

WHEN TO CALL YOUR DENTIST

- Sores, bleeding, redness or swelling in your mouth and gums.
- Pain when chewing, bad odors or taste.
- Pain in your teeth when you eat something cold, hot or sweet.
- Holes or dark spots in your teeth.
- Loose teeth.

THE BEST WAY TO BRUSH

- Brush your teeth with a fluoride toothpaste twice a day.
- Brush for at least one minute each time.
- Don't forget to brush behind your front teeth.
- Hold the brush at a 45-degree angle to your teeth.
- Move the brush back and forth in short strokes over two or three teeth at a time.
- Brush your tongue, to keep your breath smelling fresher.
- Be gentle! Plaque comes off with light pressure. Scrubbing too hard may hurt your teeth and gums.
- Brush the insides, outsides - and tops (chewing surfaces) of your teeth.

HOW TO FLOSS

- Floss at least once each day.
- Use approximately 18 inches of floss.
- Don't forget the back of your last tooth.
- Wind the floss around the middle finger of each hand.
- Use your thumbs and index fingers to guide the floss between your teeth.
- Gently work the floss between each tooth.
- Curve the floss around each tooth and slide it between the tooth and the gum, rubbing gently.

LIVING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

- Avoid tobacco. Tobacco users are seven times more likely to develop gum disease.
- Eat sugar and starches in moderation.
- Choose foods high in fiber like fruits and vegetables.
- Avoid sipping juices and sodas throughout the day.
- Drink water to wash away any acids created by sugar in your diet.