

Teeth Tips

What is a Healthy Mouth?

Pink firm gums that don't bleed

Teeth that feel firm and strong

Fresh breath

Teeth and gums free of sensitivity

Teeth absent from plaque, tartar and cavities

Ability to eat and chew a variety of foods



This issue

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Diabetes and Your Oral Health

Diabetes Mellitus is a physical condition involving impairment in the breakdown of sugars, fats, and proteins. It is caused by abnormal production or use of insulin by the body. Although diabetes affects all age groups, it's more prevalent in those of us 45 yrs and older and more common among people of African, Asian, and Hispanic origin. The incidence of diabetes is on the rise in North America due in part to an aging population. *The National Centre for Health Statistics* in the United States estimates that 221 million people worldwide will be diagnosed with diabetes by the year 2010. Medical professionals tell us that prolonged, elevated levels of blood sugar caused by this condition can result in damage to our eyes, nerves, kidneys and heart in addition to delays in wound healing. In recent years, we've discovered that diabetes can have various oral implications as well.

Oral Candidiasis

More commonly known as "thrush", this condition is caused by an overgrowth of fungus in the mouth. Thrush most commonly appears as milky white curdle-like patches in the palate and throat areas of the oral cavity and can be quite uncomfortable. This infection is related to weakened immunity resulting from diabetes. Improving control of blood glucose levels will decrease your risks of developing oral candidiasis.

Taste Disturbances and Burning Mouth Syndrome

Both of these symptoms can be quite bothersome and thought to be related to abnormal nerve function caused by persistent elevated levels of blood sugar. Improvements





Healthy Smile and Body Know the Connection

in these conditions often concur with improved management of one's diabetes.

Dry Mouth Condition

A significant number of diabetics complain of dry mouth. This condition is uncomfortable and can interfere with eating, swallowing, and speech. Although not completely understood, dry mouth is related to poor functioning of the salivary glands resulting from inadequate control of blood glucose levels.

Cavities

Research studies show diabetics have higher incidence of tooth decay. This is thought to result from insufficient salivary flow and dry mouth; saliva is known to offer protective elements against the formation and development of cavities.

Gum Disease and Diabetes

Recent scientific data points to gum disease as a significant and major complication of diabetes. Also known as periodontitis, gum disease involves infection of the gums and loss of bone around teeth that can lead to tooth loss. Gum disease is often more severe when other complications from

diabetes are present such as heart or kidney disease. It's also known that poor control of blood glucose levels are related to more advanced cases of periodontitis. In diabetics, it's believed that an impaired immune response aggravated by high levels of blood sugar can worsen the progression of gum disease.

There's also evidence suggesting diabetics with untreated and poorly managed gum disease are at risk of having poorly managed blood glucose levels. It seems that infections entering the blood stream from the mouth can interfere with our body's ability to effectively use insulin.

Oral Health and Diabetes Management

The relationship between oral health and diabetes is quite complex. To effectively manage diabetes, it's important to keep a strict schedule of blood glucose monitoring and medications along with proper diet and plenty of daily physical exercise. Maintaining optimal oral health contributes to the control of diabetes. Good daily oral hygiene care and regular visits to your oral health care professional will go a long way to promote both oral and overall health.

Our services

Oral Assessments
Scaling
Teeth Whitening
Polishing
Denture Care
Desensitizing Teeth
Tobacco Cessation
Oral Cancer Screen
Sports Guards
Referrals

We'll come to you!

House calls are available for seniors in retirement residences, nursing homes and adult day centres.

directSmiles is located in Caledon and Oakville. We service the GTA and surrounding areas.



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