



Taking Control of your Oral and Whole Body Health

The relationship between periodontal (gum) disease and chronic medical conditions continues to be confirmed through scientific research. Periodontal disease is a chronic bacterial infection that causes inflammation that can worsen medical conditions such as diabetes, asthma, heart disease and stroke.

The inflammation from gum disease makes it more difficult to control blood glucose levels. Also, gum disease worsens with poor blood glucose maintenance. To have the best health possible, people with both of these chronic conditions need to visit their dentist frequently and follow their physician's recommendations closely. Periodontal disease is so common in people with diabetes that it is often called the sixth complication of diabetes. The five most common complications are cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, eye disease, nerve disease, and foot and skin problems.

Heart disease is affected by the bacteria and inflammation from periodontal disease. Bacteria from the mouth travel into

the blood stream and collect in areas of the heart and arteries, and are associated with blood clots that cause heart attacks and strokes. The inflammation from gum disease contributes to the body's overall response to chronic medical conditions. To help prevent heart disease and stroke, good oral health is essential. If you have been diagnosed with heart disease, see your dentist for frequent oral health care to support your overall wellness. You should tell your physician if you have gum disease since this can help him/her understand how to help you manage your chronic medical conditions. Gum disease and tooth decay are transmissible infections, but are also preventable!

Do you know your score? To learn what your individual risk is for periodontal disease, go to www.mydentalscore.com. Take the test, print your results, and take it to your next dental visit. Ask your dentist or hygienist if you are at risk or already have periodontal disease.