

DENTAL CARE AND DIABETES

Diabetes can lead to increased dental problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. Elevated blood glucose levels can promote the growth of bacteria in the mouth, which can form a film called plaque that sticks to your teeth and gums. High blood glucose levels promote plaque formation and can result in cavities, infection, gingivitis (red, swollen gums that bleed easily) and periodontitis (gums that pull away from the teeth). Managing blood glucose levels, proper dental care and routine screening visits to your dentist every six months for cleaning and examination can prevent these problems.

Please consider the following recommendations for the prevention of dental problems:

- Brush your teeth at least twice a day and brush before going to bed.
- Use a soft bristle toothbrush and replace your toothbrush every 3 months.
- Floss between your teeth daily. The dental staff is a great resource to demonstrate proper flossing technique if you have any questions or special needs.
- See your dentist at least once every 6 months for cleaning and examination of your teeth and gums.
- See your dentist immediately if you have any problems chewing, bad taste in your mouth, bleeding or sore gums, red or swollen gums, sore or loose teeth.
- Be sure to remind the dental staff that you have diabetes each visit (let them know the name and phone number of the physician who is treating your diabetes).
- Plan the time of your dental appointment so you do not have to delay or omit meals or medications.

Please note the following resources for additional information about Diabetes and dental care needs:

American Diabetes Association
1701 Beauregard Street
Alexandria, VA 22311
(800) 342-2383
www.diabetes.org

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)
National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse (NDIC)
1 Information Way
Bethesda, MD 20892-3560
(800) 860-8747
www.niddk.nih.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Division of Diabetes Translation, Public Inquiries and Publications
PO Box 8728
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(877) 232-3422
www.cdc.gov/diabetes

HEALTHY INITIATIVES

TML IEBP Medical Management, PO Box 141039, Austin, Texas 78714-1039
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