



# Diabetes Education

Individuals with diabetes know about the importance of **DAILY** dental hygiene such as brushing teeth and flossing in keeping their **TEETH** and **GUMS** healthy.

These simple practices along with maintaining blood sugars in target range may prevent or **REDUCE** the nerve damage that results from decreased blood circulation in the gums.



## Why Maintain Good Oral Health?

Now there might be another reason to maintain good oral health - helping the insulin your body makes work better.

Keeping your teeth and gums healthy, and keeping blood sugars in target range can ***DECREASE*** your risk of developing complications in the gums and teeth that are associated with diabetes.

## Dental Health

### Keeping Your Teeth and Gums Healthy:

Gum infections (*gingivitis and periodontal disease*) and fungal infections such as thrush happen more frequently among people with diabetes. But, by taking good care of your teeth daily and seeing your dentist **AT LEAST** once a year you can prevent this complication of diabetes from happening.

Now there is new research showing an added benefit of maintaining good dental hygiene: decreased insulin resistance. Insulin resistance occurs in type 2 diabetes when the insulin that is made does not work well causing blood sugars to rise.

The results of these studies showed that individuals with gum infections had more insulin resistance. The theory is that the infection enters the blood stream and causes insulin resistance. Other factors in favor of maintaining healthy teeth and gums are better blood sugar control and less complications from type 2 diabetes.



In addition to maintaining daily dental hygiene, visiting your dentist **EVERY** 6 months is **Recommended**.

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# Dental Health

## What Kind of Toothbrush Is Best:

With the proper technique, either manual or power toothbrushes will clean teeth thoroughly. It is more important to use one that is comfortable for you, and to change the brush when it becomes worn and frayed – usually **EVERY** 3 months.

## What About Mouth Rinses?

*American Dental Association* accepted antimicrobial mouth rinses and toothpastes have proven these claims by showing significant reductions in dental cavities and gum disease.

Fluoride mouth rinses help **REDUCE** and **PREVENT** tooth decay.

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## Here Are Self Care Behaviors You Can Do to Keep Your Teeth and Gums Healthy:

- ✓ See your dentist twice a year and remind him that you have diabetes
- ✓ Brush your teeth **TWICE** a day and floss **EVERY DAY**
- ✓ Try to limit in between snacks as your blood sugar allows
- ✓ Ask your dentist of early warning signs of gum disease or fungal infection so that you know what to look for.
- ✓ Use toothpaste containing fluoride and other products that have the seal of the *American Dental Association*.
- ✓ Eat before you see your dentist. The best time for dental work is when your blood sugar level is in a normal range. If you take insulin, a morning visit after eating breakfast is the best time to schedule a visit.
- ✓ Stick to your normal meal plan after dental work to prevent swings in your blood sugar.
- ✓ Postpone any non-emergency dental procedures if your blood sugar is not in good control.



## Picking a Dental Floss:

There are an amazing variety of dental floss available. All types will remove bacteria that causes dental caries (cavities) and food debris from between your teeth. It's just a matter of picking what works best for you:

- **Dental Flossers** are easier to use than the regular floss. These eliminate the technique of wrapping the thread around your fingers.
- **Conventional Floss** is the old fashioned type where a piece at least 18 inches long is wrapped around the index fingers. If you find the regular thread-like floss is uncomfortable for your gums, try dental ribbon, which is smoother.



- **Floss Threaders** are used for fixed bridges in the mouth. Floss threaders allow you to pass through the floss **BETWEEN** your teeth, under the bridge work.

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