

Serious Gum Disease: A Surprising Complication Of Diabetes

(NAPSA)—Nearly 21 million Americans have diabetes, and many may be surprised to learn about an unexpected complication associated with this condition. Research shows that there is an increased prevalence of gum disease among those with diabetes. This adds serious gum disease to the list of other complications associated with diabetes, such as heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.

Emerging research also suggests that the relationship between gum disease and diabetes may be two-way. Not only are people with diabetes more susceptible to serious gum disease, but serious gum disease may have the potential to affect blood glucose control and contribute to the progression of diabetes.

Who's at Risk?

A growing number of Americans have diabetes or are at risk for diabetes:

- Approximately 9.7 million women and 10.9 million men aged 20 years or older have diabetes—furthermore, one third of this population is unaware that they have diabetes.

People of certain ethnic backgrounds are at greater risk:

- African-American, Hispanic/Latino American, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander women are at least two to four times more likely than Caucasian women to have diabetes.

- African-Americans are almost twice as likely to have diabetes as Caucasians.

Is There a Two-Way Street?

According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), almost

Oral care steps that may benefit people with diabetes include

- Visiting your dentist office every six months and making sure they are aware of any medical conditions you have
- Using Colgate Total toothpaste as a part of your daily oral care routine to help prevent and reduce plaque and gingivitis—these benefits meet the American Dental Association's requirements for an antibacterial toothpaste
- Brushing for two minutes twice a day
- Flossing daily.

For more information, go to www.diabetes.org/oral-health.



one-third of people with diabetes have severe gum disease. Research suggests that people with diabetes are at higher risk for oral health problems, such as gingivitis (an early stage of gum disease) and periodontitis (serious gum disease). People with diabetes are at an increased risk for serious gum disease because they are generally more susceptible to bacterial infection and have a decreased ability to fight bacteria that invade the gums.

What Can You Do Now?

“There are steps that people with diabetes, and people at risk for diabetes, should take to promote optimal oral health,” says Maria E. Ryan, DDS, Ph.D., professor, SUNY Stony Brook. “I recommend visiting a dental professional regularly to assess an individual's oral health and to address any oral infection and inflammation. Simple homecare instructions include flossing daily and brushing twice a day for two minutes with an antibacterial toothpaste, such as Colgate Total. This toothpaste is

formulated to help prevent gum disease by fighting oral bacteria for 12 hours, thereby helping to sustain reduced levels of bacteria in between brushing.”

Recently, Colgate-Palmolive signed on as a National Strategic Partner with the ADA to help educate people with diabetes and their health care professionals. ADA's Web site features information about the oral health and diabetes association in a new “Oral Care” section that promotes practical information and advice on maintaining good oral health.

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If you have diabetes, consider taking some simple steps to help your body and manage your diabetes including exercising regularly, eating a proper diet and taking care of your mouth. Your body will thank you for it! For more information, go to www.diabetes.org/oral-health.

Note: Colgate Total is FDA approved for the prevention of tooth decay, plaque and gingivitis. It is not approved for the prevention or treatment of periodontitis or other diseases, such as diabetes.