

Diabetes and Your Teeth

Taking care of your teeth and gums is very important when you have diabetes. Diabetes may increase your risk for infections in your gums or weaknesses in the bones that hold your teeth in place. At the same time, gum disease can make it harder to control your blood sugars. Often gum disease is painless. You may not even know you have it until you have some serious damage.

Follow these tips for a healthy mouth:

- Brush your teeth with a soft brush 2 times each day.
- See your dentist for regular checkups 2 times each year.
- Get a new toothbrush every 3 to 4 months.
- If you wear any type of denture, clean it every day.
- Floss at least once a day.
- Tell the dentist that you have diabetes.
- Before any non-emergency dental work, talk to your health care provider to see if your blood sugar is in target range.



Avoid these complications:

- Dry mouth
- Thrush (yeast or fungal infection in your mouth)
- Tooth decay (rotting teeth)
- People with diabetes risk losing their teeth
- Gum disease

See your dentist if you have:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Bleeding gums
- Loose teeth
- Mouth pain
- Dry mouth
- Bad breath



Remember:

Keep a close check on your health checks (see below) to keep problems from happening. Fill out the chart below.

Test	Goal	My last value
A1c	Less than 7 percent	
Blood pressure	Less than 140/90mm/Hg	
LDL (Bad cholesterol)	Less than 100mg/dL	
Do I smoke?	Never	

When you notice a tooth or gum problem,
see your dentist right away.