

Diabetes and Your Mouth

25% of Americans over the age of 65 have type 2 diabetes¹

48% of Adults age 65 and older have prediabetes which is a strong risk factor for type 2 diabetes.¹

How can diabetes affect the mouth?

If your blood glucose (sugar) levels are too high, the sugar in your saliva helps harmful germs, called plaque grow. It can cause pain, gum disease, infection and other problems in your mouth.

How can the mouth affect diabetes?

If you have gum disease, any infection or inflammation in your mouth, it becomes more difficult to control your blood sugars. This is because any infection causes insulin resistance and high blood sugar. By keeping one condition in check, you're actually helping the other condition.

What are the problems diabetes can cause in the mouth?

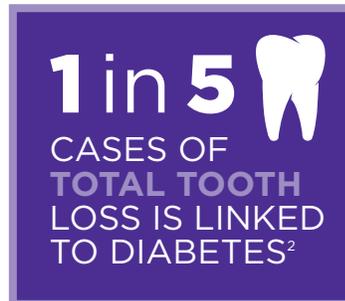
- Gingivitis: bleeding gums.
- Periodontitis: Gum disease
- Thrush
- Dry Mouth

What are the warning signs that there is a problem in the mouth?

- Bleeding, red, swollen or tender gums.
- Loose teeth, pain when chewing, or changes in the way your teeth fit when you bite.
- Pus between the teeth and gums.
- Bad breath
- Dry Mouth
- Pain in the mouth, face, or jaw that doesn't go away
- Sore or ulcer that does not heal.

What can be done to avoid oral health problems?

- Control your blood glucose
- Brush and floss your teeth every day to control plaque
- Visit your dentist regularly
- Eat healthy meals
- Quit smoking



All health and long term care service and support (LTSS) professionals/caregivers are expected to work within their Scopes of Practice or job descriptions as defined by the State or employer. Family caregivers are encouraged to contact the dental or medical provider before making changes to a loved one's care plan.

GOOD BLOOD GLUCOSE CONTROL = GOOD ORAL HEALTH

GOOD ORAL HEALTH = GOOD BLOOD GLUCOSE CONTROL



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Meet Carol, a Registered Dental Hygienist and a Mouth Care Matters consultant and instructor.

Carol Van Aernam is a Mouth Care Matters (MCM) instructor and consultant for Iowa CareGivers. She plays a key role in planning, promoting, and teaching MCM. Carol worked in private dental practice for several years and 34 years for the Veterans Administration and Central Iowa Health Care System as a dental hygienist. She specializes in geriatric care and has presented programs at the local and national levels to those who work in direct care, dietitians, dentists, dental hygienists, and other caregivers. In addition, Carol served as an adjunct instructor for Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and the University of Iowa.



For additional information:

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¹ U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2017. Available at: cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.pdf. Accessed April 11, 2018.

² American Dental Association: One in 5 cases of tooth loss.