

What can you do?

Look after your oral health and your general health by:

- Stop smoking/nicotine substitutes
- Eat a healthy balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables
- Exercise regularly
- If you have diabetes - monitor and control your blood sugar levels
- Visit your Dentist regularly for check-ups
- Ask your Dentist/Hygienist/Therapist about your gum health and how you can improve this



Did you know?

- Gum diseases are linked to several major diseases
- Treatment of gum disease may improve your overall health
- Looking after your gums by stopping smoking, eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly will also benefit the rest of your body



More information on gum health and periodontal disease
can be found at: bsperio.org.uk/patients
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Healthy gums healthy body healthy life



Your guide to optimum gum health

Links between gum disease and other conditions

We know that there are links between gum disease (periodontitis) and a range of other conditions. Four conditions most thoroughly studied are:

- Diabetes
- Pregnancy
- Cardiovascular disease
- Dementia

In looking after your overall health, it is worth considering the effect of gum disease on these conditions.



Diabetes

Diabetes is a condition where the body does not produce or respond to insulin, resulting in increased levels of sugar in the blood. The links between gum disease and type II diabetes are particularly strong. For example, we know that:

- Patients with gum disease but without diabetes are more likely to develop diabetes, compared to those with healthy gums.
- Patients with diabetes and gum disease can find it difficult to control their blood sugar and are more likely to suffer diabetes complications.
- Treatment of gum disease can improve the control of blood sugar in people with diabetes.



Pregnancy

- Red, swollen, bleeding gums are common in pregnancy but are not normal and can be readily and safely treated during pregnancy.
- Women aware of their pregnancy should inform their dentist about this, including the due date and details of any previous pregnancies.
- Gum disease may be a risk factor for women with high risk of pregnancy complications.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD)

CVD is an umbrella term which covers a range of disorders of the heart and blood vessels. Common examples include heart attacks, angina and stroke. CVD and gum disease share the same risk factors. For patients worried about CVD, recommendations include:

- Take measures to reduce the risk of CVD and gum disease: stop smoking, eat a healthy balanced diet, exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight.
- Go for regular check-ups with the dentist and clean teeth thoroughly twice a day since gum disease may increase risk of the development of CVD.

Dementia

Dementia is an umbrella term used to describe neurological disorders, a common example being Alzheimer's disease (AD). There is a strong association between gum disease and increased risk of AD. The bacteria present at the gum margin may travel to the brain and cause damage to the brain nerve cells.

For patients worried about Dementia, recommendations include:

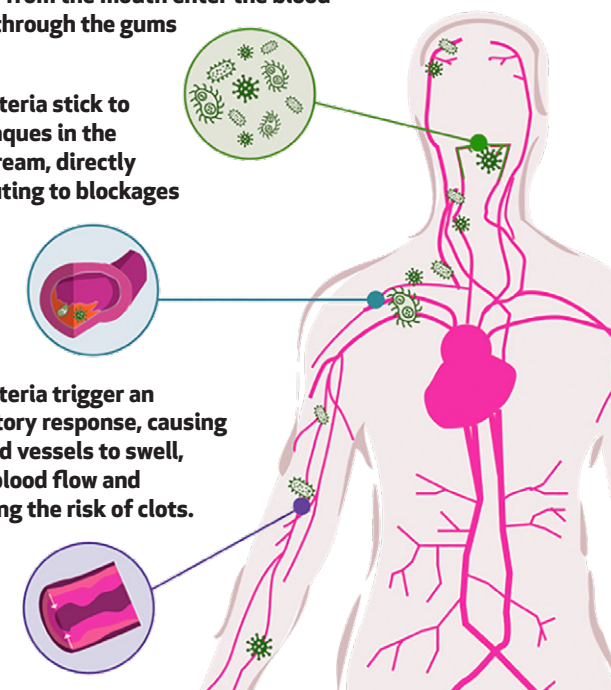
- Go for regular check-ups with the dentist.
- Clean teeth thoroughly twice a day to reduce the amount of bacteria in the mouth, this may help prevent further neuronal degeneration.

Gum disease and heart disease: The Bacteria Connection

Bacteria from the mouth enter the blood stream through the gums

Oral bacteria stick to fatty plaques in the bloodstream, directly contributing to blockages

Oral bacteria trigger an inflammatory response, causing the blood vessels to swell, reduce blood flow and increasing the risk of clots.



For more information on how your gum health may be affecting your health visit: bsperio.org.uk/patients