

# Diabetes

extra special care for your teeth

## Diabetes and Oral Health

Early detection of periodontal (gum and bone) disease and tooth decay is an important strategy to reduce oral health complications associated with Diabetes, particularly Type II Diabetes.

**Diabetes can lower your resistance to infection and can slow the healing process.**

It is associated with:

- Tooth decay
- Periodontal disease
- Salivary gland dysfunction
- Fungal infections
- Lichen planus and lichenoid reactions (inflammatory skin disease)
- Infection and delayed healing
- Taste impairment

## Periodontal Disease

When Diabetes is not controlled properly, high glucose levels in saliva may help bacteria thrive. Plaque (sticky film of bacteria) that is not removed will eventually harden into tartar or calculus. This build up around teeth and under the gum line can cause a chronic inflammation and infection. This can lead to loss of bone supporting teeth and eventually, tooth loss.

Because Diabetes reduces the body's resistance to infection, the gums are among the tissues likely to be affected. Periodontal disease is often linked to the control of Diabetes. People with inadequate blood sugar control appear to develop gum disease more often and more severely.

## Fungal Infections

Bacteria, viruses and fungi occur naturally in the mouth. The body's natural defences and regular oral hygiene keep them under control. Under certain conditions they will grow and impede the body's defences.

**Oral candidiasis** in the mouth occurs more frequently in people with Diabetes including those who wear dentures. If you smoke, have high blood glucose levels, take antibiotics often, you are more likely to have fungal infections.

A decrease in saliva flow and an increase in salivary glucose levels create an attractive environment for infections such as thrush. Thrush produces white or red patches in the mouth that may be sore or ulcerous. It may attack the tongue causing a painful, burning sensation and can cause difficulty in swallowing and your ability to taste.

**Your Health History: It's important to keep your medical records up to date at our practice. Please let the Dentist know if you have been diagnosed with Diabetes.**

## Diabetes in Australia:

- 280 Australians develop diabetes every day
- Diabetes is Australia's fastest growing chronic disease
- Nearly 1,000,000 Australians are currently diagnosed with diabetes.
- For every person diagnosed, it is estimated that there is another who is not yet diagnosed; a total of about 1.7 million people
- The total number of Australians with diabetes and pre-diabetes is estimated at 3.2 million

[www.diabetesaustralia.com.au](http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au)

## Special Care for You and Your Teeth

There are many improvements that can be made to help your general and oral health and may also assist in reducing the risk of Type II Diabetes and oral disease

- The Dentist may prescribe antifungal medications where appropriate
- Regular dental examinations and cleaning is important to maintain overall oral health
- Periodontal (gum health) screening to detect problems in the early stages and treatment where necessary
- Brush twice a day (morning and before bed) especially around the gum line.
- Clean in between teeth once a day using floss or interdental brush
- Use an antimicrobial mouth rinse or toothpaste to help control gingivitis (early gum disease)
- Maintain a healthy diet
- Quit smoking
- Consume alcohol only in moderate amounts
- Increase level of exercise
- Reduce stress