


If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, you may know that the disease can cause problems with eyes, nerves, kidneys, heart and other parts of your body. What you may not know is that people with diabetes are twice as likely to develop periodontal disease. Periodontal diseases are infections of the gum and bone that hold your teeth in place. Periodontal disease can make it more difficult to control blood sugar levels, and then badly controlled blood sugar levels can make periodontal problems even worse. Diabetes lowers resistance to infection and can slow the healing process, making the mouth a prime target for infection. The most common oral health problems associated with diabetes are:

- Tooth decay
 - Gum disease
 - Salivary gland dysfunction, leading to dry mouth
 - Fungal infections inside the mouth
 - Sores inside the mouth
 - Infection and delayed healing
 - Changes in how food tastes
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- Take care of your teeth and gums by flossing daily and brushing twice a day. The addition of a fluoride mouth rinse into your daily routine may be helpful if you have problems with your teeth.
 - If you smoke cigarettes, quit. Diabetes and smoking are the two biggest risk factors for periodontal disease.
 - If you have diabetes, taking good care of your teeth and gums is especially important. By following these steps, you will have a healthier smile as well as an easier time controlling your blood sugar levels. For more information, please speak with your health care provider.
 - If you do not currently see a dentist and dental hygienist for regular dental cleanings and check-ups, please schedule an appointment as soon as possible.
 - Even if you have dentures, it is still important to visit a dentist and dental hygienist regularly.
 - Make sure to inform your dentist and dental hygienist that you have diabetes and tell them about any medications you are taking. Dental providers are important members of your diabetes care team.