

# Connecting Oral and Overall Health

❖ a window to your overall health ❖

## Heart Disease and Gum Disease

Inflammation anywhere in the body is bad. Inflammation has been linked with many of the chronic diseases of aging. The mouth is a significant source of inflammation when gum disease is present. When your gums are inflamed bacteria gets through the inflamed gum and into your bloodstream daily. This bacteria can then travel wherever the blood flows. Bacteria from the mouth can get into the blood stream and clog arteries.

If you have gum disease you are at an increased risk for heart attack and stroke. Heart disease is the leading killer of adults in the US.

Thus, if you want to lower your risk for heart disease and stroke it is extremely important for you to partner with us over your lifespan. We need to continually monitor you for the earliest signs of gum disease and then take whatever steps are necessary to eliminate it. Gum disease can occur without you even knowing it. Often only a dentist or hygienist can tell if you have any areas of gum disease in your mouth.

Treating any areas of gum disease in its earliest stage can help you lower your risks for heart disease and stroke.

We will recommend seeing you more frequently than twice a year. We know through solid research that it takes about 2-3 months for bacteria to reorganize and cause disease. Since it is easier for bacteria to lead to problems in your case we need to see you more frequently to make sure that we eliminate any small flare-ups before they turn into bigger problems.

Joint guidelines have recently been released by the Journals of Cardiology and Periodontology based on the relationship between gum disease and heart disease. In accordance with those guidelines, if you have gum disease you should appoint with your physician for a complete physical which includes measurements of blood pressure, blood lipid profile (total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, and fasting triglycerides), blood glucose measurement and C-reactive protein (plasma hsCRP).

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