

Don't underestimate the importance of regular dental checkups — especially for those with certain health conditions.

DELTA DENTAL®

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Healthy Smile, Healthy You®

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Can a healthy mouth help create a healthy body?

Researchers continue to find evidence that suggests good oral health may positively impact many medical conditions.[1] So it's important to brush and floss every day, and to see your dentist regularly.

The Mouth and Body Connection

- More than 120 diseases can show early symptoms in the mouth.[2]
- Evidence shows a strong association between gum disease and heart disease, stroke, diabetes, poor pregnancy outcomes and other conditions.[1]
- A mouth free of gum disease may promote an overall healthier body.[1]

Healthy Smile, Healthy You®

Healthy Smile, Healthy You is a program that addresses the following health issues:

- Diabetes
- Pregnancy
- Certain high-risk cardiac conditions
- Cancer treatment

If you have one of the above conditions, *Healthy Smile, Healthy You* allows for an additional cleaning and exam* beyond your plan limit, per benefit period. *Healthy Smile, Healthy You* also provides cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy or radiation with an additional fluoride application.

To get started, download the *Healthy Smile, Healthy You* registration form located on the Subscriber page at DeltaDentalVA.com. Once you submit the form, you can schedule your additional appointment with your dentist.

Keep Diabetes in Check

Increased sugar levels may have a negative impact on oral health by increasing the severity of existing gum disease and may lead to tooth loss. Diabetics who have gum disease may find it more difficult to control sugar levels than diabetics who do not have gum problems, because infections may cause increased blood sugar levels.[1]

Healthier Baby

Pregnant women with gum disease may be more likely to have a baby born prematurely or underweight than pregnant women without gum disease.[3] Research indicates that labor-inducing biological fluid is found in oral bacteria. This fluid increases with gum disease and may increase the risk of pre-term, low-birth weight babies.[4]

Keep Your Heart Healthier

Cardiovascular or heart disease impacts a large number of Americans. And people with gum disease have nearly double the risk for heart disease. Infections, called infective endocarditis, may enter the bloodstream and attach to fatty plaque in the heart's blood vessels. These fatty proteins then build up and thicken the walls of the arteries, leading to restricted blood flow. This may then lead to a heart attack or stroke.[5]

Reduce Side Effects of Cancer Treatment

Radiation and chemotherapy may lead to many debilitating oral conditions. Both can have direct effects on salivary glands and oral tissues resulting in increased risk for oral pain, infections and cavities. Research has shown these side effects may be reduced or even avoided with diligent oral care and participation by a dental team during cancer treatment.[6]

[1]"How Gum Disease Affects Your Health," Delta Dental Plans Association, www.oralhealth.deltadental.com/AdultOralConditions/22, DD106, accessed 10/2017.

[2]Steven L. Bricker, Robert P. Langlais, and Craig S. Miller, Oral Diagnosis, Oral Medicine and Treatment Planning (Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger, 1994).

[3]"Baby Steps to Healthy Pregnancy and On-Time Delivery," American Academy of Periodontology, www.perio.org/consumer/pregnancy.htm, accessed 10/2017.

[4]"Detection of Porphyromonas Gingivalis in the Amniotic Fluid in Pregnant Women With a Diagnosis of Threatened Premature Labor," Journal of Periodontology Online, www.joponline.org/doi/abs/10.1902/jop.2007.060368, accessed 10/2017.

[5]"Good Dental Hygiene Important for Heart Health," www.oralhealth.deltadental.com/Adult/HeartConditions/22,Delta66, accessed 10/2017.

[6]"Oral Complications of Cancer Treatment: What the Dental Team Can Do," National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health, www.nidcr.nih.gov/OralHealth/Topics/CancerTreatment/OralComplicationsCancerOral.htm, accessed 10/2017.

*You may be eligible for an additional periodontal maintenance procedure if you have a history of periodontal treatment, such as surgery.

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