

Periodontal (gum) Disease and Overall Health

Heart disease – cardiovascular disease affects 57 million people in the U.S. and kills almost a million people a year. Recent studies have shown that a person with periodontal disease is twice as likely to develop heart disease as one without the disease. Porphyromonas Gingivalis, a primary bacteria in periodontal disease, can enter the bloodstream and spread throughout the body, inflaming coronary arteries and causing changes in blood pressure, heart rate, heart function, and promoting blood clots which can lead to heart attacks and strokes.



Diabetes – periodontal disease is one of the major complications of diabetes. In fact, approximately 95 percent of Americans who suffer from the condition also have periodontal disease. Research shows that people with periodontal disease have more difficulty controlling their blood sugar level. Severe periodontal disease can also increase the risk of developing diabetes.

Respiratory Ailments – respiratory diseases like pneumonia, bronchitis, and emphysema affect millions of Americans annually. Bacteria associated with periodontal disease can travel from the mouth to the lungs and lower respiratory system where it can lead to or aggravate respiratory diseases, especially in persons who already suffer from other diseases or conditions.



Pre-mature, Under-Weight Babies – Studies have found that expectant mothers with periodontal disease are seven times more likely to deliver babies who are premature and weigh less than normal than women who don't have the disease. Bacterial infections accelerate the production of labor inducing fluids that result in pre-term births.

Source:

- American Dental Hygienists' Association, www.adha.org

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