

Most patients with well –
controlled diabetes have
no greater risk of dental
problems than anyone
else but a few problems
can arise if the disease is
not well controlled.

Aim to keep your mouth
healthy for life!

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Family Dental Care

**Diabetes and
mouth health**

Possible problems:

Dental decay (caries)

Uncontrolled diabetes may lead to an increase intake of sugars which cause decay. Good brushing with fluoride toothpaste and mouthwash will help prevent this.

Gum disease

Uncontrolled diabetes means you have reduced immunity to infections and are more prone to gum disease and other infections in the mouth. Gingivitis, inflammation of the gums, caused by bacteria in plaque or more advanced periodontitis that damages the gum and bone below and can lead to loss of teeth are both more common in diabetics.

Oral Thrush (Candida)

This is common in people with uncontrolled diabetes and needs prompt treatment.

Dry mouth (Xerostomia)

This is common at diagnosis or if diabetes is not well controlled. This means you have less protective saliva to wash around and protect the mouth and teeth from problems. Your dentist can advise ways to prevent problems.

How you can prevent problems:

- Good dental hygiene – twice daily brushing with fluoride toothpaste and use of aids for cleaning in between such as floss or Tepe brushes
- We may recommend a stronger fluoride toothpaste
- Have regular dental check ups a least once a year
- Cut down on sugary snacks
- Chew sugar free gum

Diet advice

- Sugary foods should be only taken at mealtimes.
- Fruit is a good snack in between meals for those with well controlled glucose levels.
- The only 'safe' drinks are milk, water, unsweetened tea or coffee. Pure unsweetened fruit juice is acidic and can erode the teeth if taken too often.

If there is any conflict between managing the diabetes and the oral health (eg by taking extra sugar/ glucose), then diabetes management must take priority.