

The condition of your mouth can be an indicator of health problems, and a starting point of prevention.

Your Dentist – Your Health

Your dentist is a health care professional who provides complete dental care by diagnosing, treating and helping prevent dental health problems. This includes the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the teeth, gums, mouth and jaw.

Only your dentist has the skills, knowledge and expertise to identify and address all your dental health needs.

A Regular Dental Exam is Important

A dental exam, diagnosis and individualized treatment plan is critical to your ongoing dental health - and only your dentist can perform this. It is important to see your dentist regularly as problems can exist without your knowing. Some health conditions may present early warning signs in the mouth, gum, teeth and jaw. Your dentist will check for anything unusual.

Your regular visit to your dentist includes a dental exam including:

- head and neck exam (extra-oral);
- dental exam (intra-oral); and
- dental preventive services.



For the extra-oral review, your dentist will:

- examine your lips, bones and facial muscles;
- examine your neck;
- check your lymph nodes; and
- check the overall health and function of you temporomandibular joint (TMJ) (the joint that joins your jaw to your skull).

Your dental exam (intra-oral) looks at the condition of your teeth, gums and the tissues of your mouth. Your dentist will:

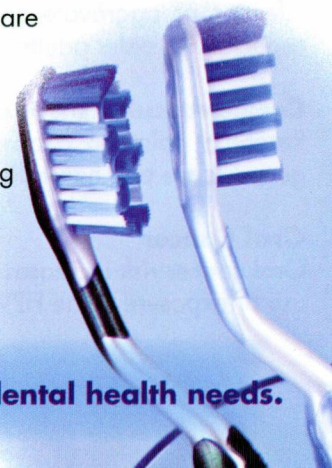
- examine your gums for signs of infection, gum disease and changes in the gums covering your teeth;
- look at the tissues inside your mouth for suspicious growths or cysts which may be early signs of oral cancer or other conditions;
- check for damaged, missing, decayed or loose teeth;
- examine your tongue;
- check the position and spacing of your teeth;
- look for visual evidence of tooth decay;
- examine fillings and crowns;
- evaluate any dental appliance you have; and
- check the contact between your teeth (the bite).

Your dental examination also includes:

- Reviewing your medical history to screen for any health conditions that may affect your dental health or dental treatment; and
- Taking X-rays. The images will review:
 - the inside of your teeth for cavities; and
 - supporting structures to access overall root health and bone health.

Dental preventive services are provided to prevent or control gum disease and cavities.

For example, teeth cleaning to remove plaque and tartar or topical fluoride applications.



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Dental Care is Preventive Health

Upon completion of your dental examination and teeth cleaning, your dentist will advise you of the health of your teeth, gums and jaw and suggest a treatment plan.

Only your dentist has the skills, knowledge and expertise to provide a comprehensive diagnosis about your dental health problems, advise you on appropriate treatment and care and help you establish a healthy dental care routine.

Healthy Teeth - Healthy Body

Poor dental health can affect more than just your mouth; it can affect other areas of your body as well. Increasing evidence shows a connection between dental health and general health and well-being. Periodontal disease/gum disease - or disease of the gums and supporting bone - has been linked to a number of diseases including:

Diabetes

There is a strong link between gum disease and diabetes. People with diabetes are not only more at risk of gum disease, but gum disease can also affect the severity of their diabetes.

Respiratory Illness

The same bacteria found in plaque can also be inhaled into the lungs where they may cause an infection or aggravate any existing lung condition, especially in older adults.

Cardiovascular Disease

Research points to a possible connection between gum disease and heart disease and stroke.

Oral Cancer

Oral cancer risk increases with tobacco use, alcohol use or exposure to the HPV virus.

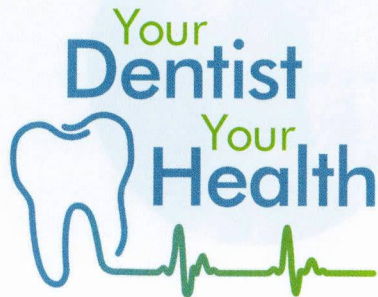
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Diseases of the mouth affect people of all ages, can be painful, cause tooth loss, poor nutrition and chronic bad breath.

Left untreated, hidden threats to your dental health - such as gum disease, cavities, infections and oral cancer - can lead to severe pain, loss of teeth and serious health implications.

Your dentist is an expert on dental health needs and knows the connection between your dental health and the overall health of your body.

For complete
dental health care:
visit your dentist



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