

# DIABETES and oral health problems



PLATINUM  
HEALTH

## SEPTEMBER IS ORAL HEALTH MONTH

Research has shown that serious gum disease and diabetes is a circular relationship. Not only are people with diabetes more susceptible to serious gum disease, but serious gum disease may make diabetes worse by affecting blood glucose control.

**Is there an association between gum disease and diabetes?**  
Research shows that there is an increased prevalence of gum disease among those with diabetes, adding serious gum disease to the list of other complications associated with diabetes, such as heart disease, stroke and kidney disease.

### **Is there a two-way street?**

The relationship between serious gum disease and diabetes is two-way. Not only are people with diabetes more susceptible to serious gum disease, but serious gum disease may have the potential to affect blood glucose control and contribute to the progression of diabetes.

### **If I have diabetes, am I at risk for dental problems?**

If your blood glucose levels are poorly controlled, you are more likely to develop serious gum disease and lose more teeth than non-diabetics. Like all infections, serious gum disease may be a factor in causing blood sugar to rise and may make diabetes harder to control.

### **How can I help prevent dental problems associated with diabetes?**

First and foremost, control your blood glucose level. Then, take good care of your teeth and gums, along with regular check-ups.

To control thrush, a fungal infection, maintain good diabetic control, avoid smoking and, if you wear them, remove and clean dentures daily. Good blood glucose control can also help prevent or relieve dry mouth caused by diabetes.

