

Diabetes and your Oral Health



13- 17 years

If your diabetes is not well controlled you are at a higher risk of developing oral health problems such as gum disease, dry mouth and oral infections.

Here are some tips to help you stay in control and reduce your risk.



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Dental Health Foundation
Ireland



**For tips please
turn over**

It is important to continue to visit your Dentist every 6-12 months. Always advise your dentist that you have diabetes.

Tooth Tips

- ✔ Brush teeth twice a day at bedtime and one other time with a fluoride toothpaste (at least 1,000ppm).
- ✔ Brush for 2-3 mins. Spit after brushing, don't rinse.
- ✔ Floss daily.
- ✔ If you wear braces, brush thoroughly every time you eat. Carry a travel toothbrush.
- ✔ Rinse your mouth after taking fast acting carbohydrates e.g for hypoglycemia treatment especially during the night.
- ✔ Make healthy food choices. Follow the advise of your Doctor/ Diabetes Team.

Infection

- ✘ Those with diabetes have a higher risk of oral infections such as thrush.
- ✘ Signs of thrush are white or red patches in the mouth. Talk to your G.P or Dentist. Risk factors for thrush are high blood glucose levels and frequent antibiotic usage.
- ✘ Mouth & tongue piercings can lead to infections, chipped teeth or damaged gums.

Gum Disease

- ✘ People with diabetes have a greater risk of gum disease. Gum disease can make it more difficult to control diabetes.
- ✘ Signs of gum disease are gums that bleed when brushed, receding gums & bad breath.
- ✔ Good oral hygiene, controlling your blood glucose and regular dental visits can help reduce your risk.

Dry Mouth

- ✘ Dry mouth increases the risk of tooth decay. Saliva substitutes and sipping water can help relieve dry mouth. Sugar free gum can increase saliva production.
- ✘ Avoid sucking sweets or drinking sweet drinks as these can cause tooth decay.

Smoking & Alcohol*

- ✘ Smoking increases your risk of gum disease, mouth cancer, bad breath and stained teeth.
- ✘ Alcohol is a risk factor for mouth cancer and can increase your risk of hypoglycemia.



* It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase tobacco or alcohol products in the Republic of Ireland.