

Oral Health and Menopause

(Peri and post menopause)

Menopause hormonal changes can impact your oral health



Research shows that low oestrogen levels can lead to an increased risk of gingivitis, gum issues, inflammation, jawbone density loss and tooth loss.



Some medications used to reduce osteoporosis risk (e.g. bisphosphonates) may impact on future dental treatment, e.g. tooth extraction. Talk to your dentist and doctor about medications and any specific oral problems.



Taking positive steps to prevent problems and maintain good oral hygiene is important during this time and can improve whole-body and oral health wellbeing.



Effects of hormonal changes on oral health may include: A burning sensation in the mouth affecting the tongue, cheeks and gums, changes in taste and sensation and dry mouth (reduced saliva flow) that can increase the risk of gum disease and tooth decay.

Tooth Tips

- Brush teeth twice a day, especially before bedtime to remove plaque that has built up during the day. Brush for 2-3 minutes with a fluoride toothpaste (1450 ppm) using a soft/medium toothbrush. Spit out, don't rinse after brushing.
- Floss daily. Use interdental brushes to remove plaque and food from the gum line and between teeth. Change the toothbrush when the bristles are worn, about every 3 months.
- Visit your dentist at least once a year for advice and a checkup.

Diet Tips

- Eat a balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D to support bone health and choose healthy snacks between meals such as whole fruit and cheese.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water to help combat dry mouth and maintain saliva production. Plain tap water and milk are the most tooth-friendly drinks. Avoid sucking sweets which can cause tooth decay.
- Limit food and drink high in sugar to reduce the risk of an 'acid attack' on teeth. Read food labels for sugar content. Less than 5g per 100g is considered low sugar.

Things to Consider

- Menopause can lead to mood swings, poor sleep and influence confidence. This in turn can cause stress and sugary food craving. Higher stress levels can also increase issues like tooth grinding, jaw clenching and tooth wear. Your dentists may recommend using a nighttime mouthguard. Consider stress-reducing exercises that benefit your overall health like walking or meditation.
- Smoking and alcohol can worsen oral health and overall wellbeing and are risk factors for gum and heart diseases. If you need support, consider www.quit.ie and www.askaboutalcohol.ie.