



Word of Mouth

BRUSH FOR BETTER HEALTH

Autumn 2023



The health of your mouth might be more important than you realise and is linked to a number of other conditions around the whole body, highlighted this month by the Oral Health Foundation.

The charity says the health of your mouth, teeth and gums can affect your general health and is calling for more people to understand the links between oral health and overall wellbeing, as Dr Nigel Carter, chief executive of the Oral Health Foundation, explains:

“Like the rest of the body, the mouth is loaded with bacteria, and while most bacteria are harmless, some can cause disease.

“Your body’s natural defences and good daily oral hygiene, such as brushing and interdental cleaning, usually keep bacteria under control. However, without good oral care, bacteria can lead to diseases like tooth decay and gum disease.

“It is the bacteria in the mouth, along with the inflammation associated with a severe form of gum disease (periodontitis), that might play a role in some diseases.”

Here are some of the most established links between oral health and general health.

HEART PROBLEMS & STROKES

People with gum disease are almost twice as likely to have coronary artery (heart) disease or a stroke than people without it.

When people have gum disease, it is

thought that bacteria from the mouth can get into their bloodstream. The bacteria produce protein. This builds up as plaques in the arteries that can then break off causing obstruction of the arteries around the heart, leading to a heart attack.

Blood clots can reduce normal blood flow, so that the heart does not get all the nutrients and oxygen it needs. If the blood flow is badly affected this could also lead to a heart attack.

Experts discovered when the gums bleed

and become inflamed, it leads to changes in how blood and oxygen flows to the brain. As bacteria responsible for gum disease find their way into the bloodstream, protein levels can rise. This elevation can lead to inflammation in the blood vessels which is usually a good indicator that a person might be at higher risk of having a stroke.

PREMATURE BABIES

Pregnant women who have gum disease may be over three times more likely to have

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FOR ALL YOUR SMILE WISHES

Here at Highgate Dental Practice, we are proud to provide:

- Zoom Teeth Whitening
- Invisalign
- Orthodontics
- Implants
- Facial Aesthetics
- Smile Design

Our team of hygienists also provide **bespoke hygiene treatments** to suit your needs.

Here is an example of our smile design work where we follow an ethos of no drilling and minimal intervention.

[Please contact us to find out more!](#)



SPOTLIGHT: Give your dental health a boost

We hope we have established that looking after our mouths will help improve our physical health and overall wellbeing.

We can all improve the health of our gums by making small changes - and the best part is that some only take a couple of minutes a day!

Cleaning between our teeth

There are lots of little interdental brushes on the market now and many people find them easier to use than dental floss.

Cleaning in between our teeth - using interdental brushes, floss or electronic water or air flossers - loosens bacteria and stuck bits of food from between our teeth. Brushing is then more successful at removing plaque.

Studies show that interdentally cleaning our teeth **before** using a toothbrush results in a much cleaner mouth when compared to those who did it afterwards.

If interdental brushes are new to you, ask us to explain how to use them and recommend the best products for your mouth.



Cut down on sugary snacks

It's far better for our teeth and general health if we eat three meals a day instead of having snacks, especially snacks laden with sugar.

Reaching for sugar-rich food and drinks not only results in sugar spikes and crashes leaving us feeling exhausted, but also provides the bacteria in our mouth with the food source it loves the most.

Try and maintain a healthy balanced diet and for our teeth it's important to avoid sugar when we can.

Swish your mouth with a fluoride mouthwash

Fluoride mouthwashes can help clear the mouth of lingering food particles and stop plaque from building up on our gums, between our teeth, and on the teeth's surface.

Use a fluoride mouthwash daily as a supplement to brushing twice daily and interdental brushing, but not as a replacement. Mouthwash can also help to freshen our breath by killing the bacteria associated with halitosis.

CARE FOR YOUR GUMS, CARE FOR YOUR BODY

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a baby that is premature and so has a low birth weight. There is a one-in-four chance that a pregnant woman with gum disease will give birth before 35 weeks.

It is thought that gum disease may raise the levels of the chemicals that bring on labour.

Research also suggests that women whose gum disease gets worse during pregnancy have an even higher risk of having a premature baby.

"Having gum disease treated properly during pregnancy can reduce the risk of a premature birth," says Dr Carter.

LUNG DISEASE

Bacterial chest infections are thought to be caused by breathing in fine droplets from the throat and mouth into the lungs. This can cause infections, such as pneumonia, or could make an existing condition worse.

People with gum disease have more bacteria in their mouths and may therefore be more likely to get chest infections. This particularly affects frail, elderly people so good oral hygiene for this group of people is therefore particularly important.

The first sign of gum disease is bleeding gums. As it advances you may experience unpleasant tastes, bad breath or loose teeth. If you notice any of these, tell us immediately.

Visit www.dentalhealth.org/news/five-conditions-that-can-be-affected-by-poor-oral-health to read the full article.

Highgate Dental Practice

21 Highgate High Street
Highgate Village
London
N6 5JT

020 8340 2138

Opening hours	
Monday	9:00 am – 5:30 pm
Tuesday	9:00 am – 7:30 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am – 7:30 pm
Thursday	9:00 am – 7:30 pm
Friday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm

contact@highgatesmiles.co.uk
www.highgatesmiles.co.uk

Articles within this newsletter are for information only. It is not our intention to endorse or recommend any specific treatment. You should seek advice and guidance from your dentist when considering any dental treatment or procedure.

PRACTICE NEWS



COMMUNITY SPIRIT

As usual, we will be participating in the Halloween trail on the 31st of October. Please join us in this wonderful community event.

WELCOME ABOARD

We are privileged to introduce our Brazilian dentist Matheus Prado, who trained at Kings College London. He has worked around the world and speaks Portuguese, English and Swedish. Brazilian dentists are famed for their top-class dentistry and cosmetic skills. Matheus has a wonderful relaxing and reassuring chairside manner and an interest in endodontic (root canal) treatments and Invisalign.