

# Diabetes and Oral Health



**Research shows a link between diabetes and oral health.**

**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.**

**A good oral hygiene routine, regular visits to your dentist and controlling your blood glucose level will help you reduce your risk.**



[www.dentalhealth.ie](http://www.dentalhealth.ie)  
[info@dentalhealth.ie](mailto:info@dentalhealth.ie)



Dental Health Foundation  
Ireland



[www.diabetes.ie](http://www.diabetes.ie)

**For tips please  
turn over**

Visit your dental team every 6-12 months for advice and a check up. 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.
- ✓ Make healthy food choices. Follow the advice of your Doctor/ Dietitian/ Diabetes Team.
- ✓ Rinse your mouth with water after taking fast acting carbohydrates e.g for hypoglycemia treatment.



## Gum Disease

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

## Dry Mouth

- ✗ Dry mouth can be caused by high blood glucose or some medication.
- ✗ 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.



## 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, frequent antibiotic usage and ill fitting dentures.

## Smoking

- ✗ Smoking increases your risk of gum disease, mouth cancer, bad breath, stained teeth and cardiovascular disease.

