

Healthy Smiles for People with Diabetes



Did you know?

People living with diabetes are three times more likely to develop gum disease and are at a higher risk for other oral health problems.

Poorly controlled diabetes can weaken the immune system and cause high levels of sugar in your saliva, which can lead to dental problems such as bone loss, gum disease and tooth decay.

Knowing how to prevent gum disease can help decrease your risk and improve your overall health!

This brochure will help you learn;

1. The ABC's of managing your diabetes
2. How diabetes affects your oral health
3. The importance of regular oral health checkups
4. How to be prepared for your dental visits

Manage Your ABC's

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, your health team can help you set and reach goals to manage your blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol and stop smoking! Here is what you should know about your ABC's.

- ✓ **A1C** (a measure of your average blood sugar over 3 months): The goal set for many people is less than 7% for this blood test, but your doctor might set a different goal for you.
- ✓ **Blood Pressure**: High blood pressure causes heart disease. The goal is less than 120/80 mmHg for most people, but check with your doctor to see what your goal should be.
- ✓ **Cholesterol**: LDL or "bad" cholesterol builds up and clogs your blood vessels. HDL or "good" cholesterol helps remove the "bad" cholesterol from your blood vessels. Ask your doctor what your cholesterol numbers should be.

Tips for improving your ABC's

- ✓ Increasing your physical activity to 150 minutes a week can reduce your A1c, blood pressure and cholesterol.
- ✓ Eat your vegetables and other high fiber foods. By eating whole fruits and vegetables you will improve your ABC's, and you can also improve your oral health!



If you are looking for additional support in managing your diabetes, visit DiabetesAllianceOfIdaho.org.



Your Healthy Smile

Getting regular dental exams, professional teeth cleanings and gum disease screenings is important. These steps can help your dentist spot and treat dental problems early and can help manage the effects of diabetes on your oral health.

During your dental visit:

- ✓ Tell your dentist about your diabetes diagnosis
- ✓ Discuss your current blood sugar levels and date of most recent A1C
- ✓ Mention any infections you may have had
- ✓ Share any changes in your medical history
- ✓ Provide a list of all prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs you are taking

You and your dentist should watch for:

- ✓ Red, swollen, or bleeding gums
- ✓ Gums pulling away from the teeth or sores on the gums
- ✓ Loose teeth or changes in bite or tooth position
- ✓ Bad breath
- ✓ Tooth/mouth pain
- ✓ White coating in the mouth/Thrush
- ✓ Changes in the fit of partials or dentures

If you notice these things between your regular dental visits, call your dentist.

At Home Care:

Managing your health starts at home. Between your dental visits be sure to:

- ✓ Brush twice a day for 2 minutes (or following meals)
- ✓ Floss at least once a day
- ✓ Swap out sugary drinks for water
- ✓ Add whole fruits and vegetables as part of your meals and snacks

Notes to take to your next appointment:

Looking for a dentist?

Here are some resources to help guide you to the right provider:

- ✓ **Idaho Smiles:** The Medicaid dental plan for the entire state of Idaho: Call 1-855-233-6262
- ✓ **GrinWell for You - Delta Dental of Idaho** free dental benefit program for qualifying Seniors: Call 1-866-894-3563
- ✓ **Idaho State Dental Association:** Find-A Dentist. Visit findadentist.ada.org to learn more.

Ready to Quit Smoking?

Visit projectfilter.org for resources available to help you quit when YOU are ready.

