



**HEALTHY SMILE**  
Dental Clinic

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# Newsletter

## Oral Health: A window to your overall health

Like many areas of the body, your mouth is packed with bacteria — most of them harmless. Normally the body's natural defences and good oral health care, such as daily brushing and flossing, can keep these bacteria under control. However, without proper oral hygiene, bacteria can reach levels that might lead to oral infections, such as tooth decay and gum disease.

In addition, certain medications — such as decongestants, antihistamines, painkillers, diuretics and antidepressants — can reduce saliva flow. Saliva washes away food and neutralizes acids produced by bacteria in the mouth, helping to protect you from microbial overgrowth that might lead to disease.

Studies suggest that oral bacteria and the inflammation associated with periodontitis — a severe form of gum disease — might play a role in some diseases.

### What conditions may be linked to oral health?

- **Endocarditis**
- **Cardiovascular disease**
- **Pregnancy and birth**- Periodontitis has been linked to premature birth and low birth weight.
- **Diabetes**
- **HIV/AIDS**
- **Osteoporosis.**
- **Alzheimer's disease**

***Contact your dental practitioner as soon as an oral health problem arise. Taking care of your oral health is an investment in your overall health!***

### How can I protect my oral health?

Practice good oral hygiene every day. For example:

- Brush your teeth at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss daily.
- Eat a healthy diet and limit between-meal snacks.
- Replace your toothbrush every three to four months or sooner if bristles are frayed.
- Schedule regular dental check-ups and cleanings.
- Avoid tobacco use.