



A guide to...

Healthy Teeth and Gums with Diabetes *Patient Information*

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Tooth Decay

People with diabetes are at greater risk of developing tooth decay, also known as caries.

Too much sugar in your blood can lead to more sugar in your saliva, and that creates the perfect breeding ground for a second group of plaque bacteria. This bacteria produces acid which attacks your tooth enamel and dentine, causing cavities. The longer sugar is present, the higher the risk of tooth decay. Looking after your teeth and gums should be a basic part of how you manage your diabetes.

You can prevent these potential complications by spotting them early and getting the right treatment from your dentist.

Gums

Gum disease is a very common disease, but when you have diabetes, your risk is higher due to high blood glucose levels.

Gum disease is caused by one group of bacteria in plaque that makes toxins that inflame the gums, known as gingivitis. It can cause loss of bone around your teeth and gum recession over time. This can lead to tooth loss, known as periodontitis.

Gums that bleed when you brush your teeth are never normal and you should see a dentist.

Make sure you brush your teeth and see your dentist regularly.

References

<https://www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/complications/gum-disease>