

Good Advice

The Oral and Systemic Health Connection

by Ilene List



Periodontal disease is among the most prevalent oral diseases. Bacteria thrives in the mouth. This bacteria can run amok in your body and lead to periodontal disease, an inflammatory process that occurs in tissue surrounding teeth. Chronic and progressive bacterial infection of gum tissue lead to bone, gum and teeth loss. Periodontal disease has many stages, ranging from mild to severe.

Research reveals associations between periodontal disease and systemic illnesses, like diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis. Inflammation is a protective immune system response to viruses and bacteria. In the case of rheumatoid arthritis the immune system mistakenly triggers inflammation, and begins to attack the body causing inflammation and painful

swollen joints. Studies have also shown that clearing up gum disease helps relieve severe arthritic symptoms.

Studies show that periodontal disease may affect metabolic control in the Diabetic patient. Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to the destruction of connective oral tissue and generalized bone loss, eventually leading to tooth loss.

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Studies suggest that periodontal disease is associated with premature birth. Pathogens travel to the placenta and cause pre-eclampsia and fetal damage.

Smoking, high stress levels and family history can contribute to periodontal disease.

Proper oral hygiene at home and regular dental visits are key factors in maintaining oral health.

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