

# Oral Health and Chronic Disease Prevention

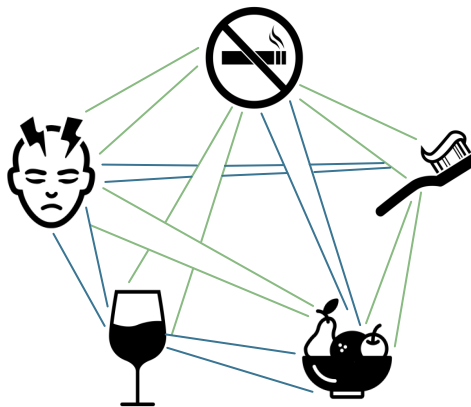
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## How are oral health and chronic diseases connected?

Oral health status is largely determined by **oral hygiene, diet, tobacco and alcohol use, stress, and trauma.**<sup>1</sup>

These factors are **shared** with many chronic diseases, like cardiovascular disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes.

These factors frequently **occur together.**



## Wisconsin Numbers

Wisconsin ranks **9th** in the nation for percent of adults visiting a dental provider in the last year,<sup>2</sup> but is **23rd** for smoking, **31st** for obesity, **49th** for excessive drinking.<sup>3</sup> Although Wisconsin ranks within the top 10 states for overall percent of adults visiting a dental provider in the last year, it is important to recognize that disparities in health outcomes and access to services exist. For example, in a state-wide survey among adults aged 21 to 74 years of age, 36% of black residents reported the costs of preventive dental services were not covered by their health plan, compared to 27% of white residents.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, in 2016, for adults with a household income under \$25,000, 13% report being diagnosed with diabetes, while only 8% with over \$50,000 did.<sup>5</sup>



Adults with a chronic disease are **1.5 times** more likely to report painful aching in the mouth.<sup>4</sup>

A **smoker** with **diabetes**,

age **45 or older**, is **20 times** more likely to develop

**severe gum disease.**<sup>6</sup>



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## What can you do?



**Don't smoke and limit alcohol.** High alcohol consumption increases the risk of high blood pressure and oral cancers.<sup>1</sup> Smoking causes an estimated 30 percent of all cancer deaths<sup>7</sup> and it makes gum (periodontal) disease worse. If you smoke, talk to your doctor or dental provider. They can help you quit. You can also call the Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line at **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.



**Eat smart.** Eat the recommended 1.5 to 2 cups of fruit per day, and 2 to 3 cups of vegetables. Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats.



**Drink fluoridated (tap) water, brush twice-a-day with fluoride toothpaste, and visit your dental provider.** Fluoride prevents tooth decay by making the tooth more resistant to attacks from bacteria and sugars in the mouth.

## Diabetes Highlight

**Gum (periodontal) disease**, a chronic bacterial infection affecting the gums and bone supporting your teeth, is the **sixth most common complication of diabetes**.<sup>6</sup>

High blood sugar causes harmful bacteria growth in the mouth. These bacteria can lead to infections like tooth decay and gum disease. Having an infection can make blood sugar hard to control. To maintain good health, both well-controlled blood sugar levels and good oral health are needed.

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3. America's Health Rankings 2016. <https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/2016-annual-report/state/WI>.

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5. Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Survey Trend Data, 2016. Age-adjusted rates. <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/index.htm>

6. Diabetes and Periodontal Disease." <https://www.webmd.com/diabetes/periodontal-disease#1>. Accessed November 9, 2015.

7. Lortet-Tieulent, J. *et al.* State-Level Cancer Mortality Attributable to Cigarette Smoking in the United States. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2016;176(12):1792-1798. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.6530

8. The Noun Project Delwar Hossain; Thengakola; Guilherme Furtado; Ker'is; Ben Davis; Oliver Gomez.

