

## [The Damaging Side Effects Of Bad Teeth](#)

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We all know what bad teeth are like – they are painful. And that’s often when we only have a small cavity. What must it be like to have teeth that are decayed to the gum level? Bad teeth can have detrimental effects to people’s health far beyond just a tooth ache. Consider some of these side effects:

**Bad headaches.** Decayed teeth can cause headaches although they are generally not ‘true’ headaches. Often the pain radiates up the jaw to the ear and into the scalp causing what feels like a severe headache.

**Throat infections.** Bad teeth means there is bacteria thriving in the mouth. These can lead to sore throats through a wide range of throat infections.

**Stomach problems.** There are a wide range of stomach problems that can be caused by bad teeth. If teeth are sore then chewing becomes problematic, leading to partially chewed food being swallowed. This can lead to problems such as heartburn or indigestion. Bacteria entering the stomach from decayed teeth can also create problems.

**Heart disease.** You may think it strange that bad teeth is in any way linked to heart disease – yet it is. There are many diseases of the heart and many of them relate to a bacterial infection. How does the bacteria get to the heart? Through the blood stream, and the starting point is through your gums. Bad teeth invariably mean poor gums and poor gums provide an open doorway for bacteria to invade the inner body.

Poor teeth can have a general effect on a patient’s body. While bacterial infections can be bad, add to these poor digestive health and a general feeling of being run down and bacteria suddenly find a weakened host that is easy to attack.

If you have teeth with even the slightest decay, see your dentist. In many cases, the decay can be removed and a filling put in to seal the hole. Other forms of [dental restoration](#) could be considered although in some cases the tooth may need removing, but this is a last option – however, it is an option that is better than some of the side effects you could suffer.

## **20 Most Popular Myths about Dentistry**

It seems like everything is known about the rules and recommendations on how to take care about our teeth effectively. However, day after day new versions of good old principles of [dental care](#) appear here and there. As a result, many people still remain confused about the basics of [brushing](#), [flossing](#), [whitening](#) and other dental care procedures. Check out the most popular dental myths and related comments of dental specialists.

**MYTH: *Brushing my teeth several times a day harms the enamel.***

**TRUTH:** This is partially true. Usually, it is enough to brush your teeth two times a day, but if you have an opportunity to brush your teeth more frequently (for example, after every meal), use a soft or extra soft toothbrush.

**MYTH: *Expensive toothpastes are always better than cheap ones.***

**TRUTH:** It is not always true, and some moderately expensive toothpastes can be very effective. Ask your dentist about the toothpastes that can be good for your particular dental situation.

**MYTH: *Using a sugarless chewing gum with xylitol after meal can replace brushing and have the***

*same effect.*

**TRUTH:** Not really, but if you can not brush your teeth after every meal, you can use a sugarless chewing gum to clean your teeth and refresh your breath. Do not chew it for more than 10 minutes.

**MYTH:** *I must not brush my teeth if my gums bleed.*

**TRUTH:** Bleeding gums is a sign to see your dentist. However, if you can not do this as soon as possible, you can brush your teeth with a soft or extra soft toothbrush.

**MYTH:** *Placing a tablet of aspirin beside my aching tooth can ease the pain.*

**TRUTH:** Aspirin does not work effectively for relieving toothache. Besides, it damages soft tissues in you mouth. Therefore, it is better to use natural analgesics, such as clover oil or tea tree oil.

**MYTH:** *There is no need in seeing dentist if there is no visible problem with my teeth.*

**TRUTH:** You must see your dentist twice a year, no matter in what condition your teeth are at the moment. Sometimes, only a dentist can see possible problem, and it is always better to start treatment on the earliest stages.

**MYTH:** *If tooth enamel is white, the tooth must be considered healthy.*

**TRUTH:** This is absolutely not true! A tooth can look healthy and white, but, at the same time, it can have cavities, problems with the root or other abnormalities that require treatment.

**MYTH:** *After a decayed tooth is treated, there will be no more decaying there.*

**TRUTH:** There is no guarantee for this. After the treatment, every tooth must be properly cared about: regularly brushed, flossed and so on.

**MYTH:** *It is better to treat a decaying tooth rather than opt for removing it.*

**TRUTH:** Before making a decision whether to continue treatment or remove an aching tooth you have to consult a qualified dental professional and, possibly, ask for the opinion of several specialists. Sometimes, even totally decayed tooth can be restored, and, at the same time, there are situations when even a healthy looking tooth must be extracted.

**MYTH:** *It is better to remove wisdom teeth because they usually cause problems.*

**TRUTH:** Do not extract your wisdom teeth until you have started having real problems with them.

**MYTH:** *Good dental health can be inherited.*

**TRUTH:** Such factor as inheritance plays minor role for good dental health of people. The main rules are to maintain proper oral hygiene and visit your dentist regularly.

**MYTH:** *Eating a lot of chocolate brings to tooth decay.*

**TRUTH:** No, it does not, but if you do not brush your teeth or at least rinse your mouth every time after eating chocolate, you are at much higher risk to get tooth decay.

**MYTH:** *Eating too hot or too cold meals can harm my teeth.*

**TRUTH:** Only regular eating too hot or too cold meals can be harmful for your teeth and dental nerves.

**MYTH:** *Using toothpicks after meals can widen the gaps between my teeth.*

**TRUTH:** Using usual toothpicks can not have such effects, but you must be very careful when using toothpicks because they can damage the gums and other soft tissues in your mouth.

**MYTH:** *Teeth whitening is harmful as it can damage the enamel.*

**TRUTH:** Modern methods of teeth whitening, including laser teeth whitening or Air Flow technique, have minimal harmful effects. Nevertheless, one must remember that teeth whitening can not be recommended for many people, especially for those who has sensitive teeth, problematic enamel, underdeveloped tooth tissues, as well as for pregnant and nursing women.

**MYTH:** *After any bleaching procedure teeth do not remain shining white for long time.*

**TRUTH:** In average, the effect can last for about a year or so, but after every following bleaching procedure the duration of the effects usually decreases.

**MYTH:** *It is not harmful to whiten your teeth with usual sodium bicarbonate.*

**TRUTH:** It is, actually, very harmful, because sodium bicarbonate we use for baking has very strong abrasive effects. If you want to whiten your teeth in an easy way, use special whitening toothpastes with bicarbonate. Such toothpastes contain much smaller particles of bicarbonate and they do not damage teeth that much.

**MYTH:** *There is no need in taking care about the teeth of my baby because in some years they are going to fall out.*

**TRUTH:** This is absolutely wrong from a variety of perspectives. First of all, if you do not take care about premature teeth, they may fall out before the time and cause problems with bite or improper development of your child's permanent teeth. Besides, it is necessary to start educating your children to maintain good dental and oral hygiene since early childhood.

**MYTH:** *It is necessary to avoid dental procedures during pregnancy.*

**TRUTH:** Regular dental treatment must not be avoided by pregnant women, but there is a number of procedures, such as X-rays or surgical dental procedures, which must be postponed for pregnant women.

**MYTH:** *Any type of dental treatment is very painful.*

**TRUTH:** Not anymore. Advanced dental technologies allow making dental treatment not painful by using anesthetic agents.

## Effects of Bad Dental Health

Believe it or not, your oral health affects a whole lot more than just your teeth. You see, there are actually many negative effects of bad dental health that can affect your entire body. While you may not realize it, dental care affects health and can lead to various health problems if you are not careful to take care of your teeth, gums and mouth. Dealing with gum disease or even cavities can end up contributing to a variety of health problems that are quite serious, including diabetes, premature babies, respiratory problems, and even heart disease. So, it's important to learn more about the effects of bad dental health and how you can prevent it.

### Respiratory Infections

One of the effects of bad dental health can actually end up being frequent respiratory infections, since the agents that cause these infections occur more frequently and in higher amounts of people who are dealing with periodontal diseases. This means that if you have bad dental health, you could end up with various respiratory problems, such as chronic bronchitis or even pneumonia.

### Osteoporosis

While many people do not realize it, there is actually a link between oral health and osteoporosis as well, since bad oral health can actually affect the bone metabolism. Often some of the first signs that people are dealing with osteoporosis are found by their dentist in a simple oral examination.

### Strokes and Heart Disease

One measure of periodontal disease is bone loss that occurs in the part of the jaw that has the tooth sockets in it, and this problem can be a predictor that someone is going to end up dealing with heart disease. When people deal with periodontal disease, the bacteria that is involved can end up leading to

blood clots, which increases the risk of strokes and heart attacks alike. Those who have problems with oral health are found to be more likely to deal with a stroke or heart disease than those with healthy mouths.

### Pregnancy Problems

There are various pregnancy problems that can occur as well in women who have problems with their oral health. Bad oral health can be the cause of babies that are underweight when they are born or premature births as well. Women who are pregnant have elevated levels of certain hormones within their body and it can make their gums react in a different way to plaque, which makes them even more likely to deal with gum disease while they are pregnant. So, keeping your gums and teeth healthy during pregnancy is important if you want to have a healthy baby.

### Diabetes

Diabetes is one of the top causes of death within the United States today. There is quite a bit of documentation that there is some kind of a link between periodontal disease and diabetes. People who have diabetes have a harder time fighting off infections, which means they have a harder time fighting off these problems. Also, those who have problems with periodontal disease also have a harder time keeping their blood sugar levels stable as well. So, for patients who are dealing with diabetes, great daily oral care is important as is early detection of any gum problems.

After taking a look at how dental care effects health, it is easy to see how important it is to maintain great oral health. This includes taking care of your teeth on a daily basis, but there is more to it than that as well. It is important that you also take the time to get routine checkups with your dentist to insure that you get the best care possible for your teeth. Your dentist can advise you on the best care for your mouth and can also help you make sure that any problems are detected early on when they are treatable. There are many effects of bad dental health that can affect your overall health, so getting regular dental checkups and taking care of your teeth on a daily basis is essential.

## The Mouth-Body Connection

Certain conditions can have direct negative effects on the oral cavity — including unhealthy diet, tobacco use, and harmful alcohol use. Oral diseases share common risk factors with the four leading chronic diseases:

- cardiovascular diseases
- cancer
- chronic respiratory diseases
- diabetes

*Poor oral hygiene is also a risk factor*

## Uncontrolled Diabetes

Diabetes, especially, has oral health implications. It can lead to changes in the oral cavity. Poor glycemic (blood sugar level) control in diabetics is associated with gingivitis and more severe periodontal diseases (gum disease). Oral signs and symptoms of diabetes can also include a

neurosensory disorder known as burning mouth syndrome, taste disorders, abnormal wound healing, and fungal infections. Individuals with diabetes may notice a fruity (acetone) breath or frequent dry mouth, which can also lead to a marked increase in dental decay. Diabetes can weaken the body's resistance to infections, and high blood glucose levels in saliva can help bacteria to thrive. Therefore, uncontrolled diabetes and uncontrolled gum disease enhance one another. Diabetics have about twice the risk for periodontal disease as healthy patients, and almost one-third of people with diabetes have severe periodontal disease.

## **Heart Disorders**

Periodontal disease (gum disease) has been identified as a risk factor for such conditions as heart disease and rheumatoid arthritis, perhaps through a pathway of increased systemic inflammation. Not many people are aware of recent research that associates heart disease (and even strokes) with poor oral hygiene. A lax regime in oral care leaves the blood low in Lipoproteins, research shows that this disorder is a leading factor in hardening of the arteries. Bad oral hygiene kills off the good part of lipoproteins (HDL & LDL) which carry proteins from one organ to another. If the proteins aren't absorbed by the organs then the organ will experience problems -- this leads to many of the diseases, which together, can cause a heart attack. All this can be prevented by spending a little more time on brushing, flossing and making sure that our gums are healthier.

## **Respiratory Disease**

Scientists have found that bacteria that grow in the oral cavity can be taken into the lungs to cause respiratory diseases such as pneumonia. This is true especially in people with periodontal disease. This discovery leads researchers to believe that these respiratory bacteria can travel from the oral cavity into the lungs to cause infection. Bacterial respiratory infections are thought to be acquired through aspiration (inhaling) of fine droplets from the mouth and throat into the lungs. These droplets contain germs that can breed and multiply within the lungs to cause damage. Recent research suggests that bacteria found in the throat, as well as bacteria found in the mouth, can be drawn into the lower respiratory tract. This can cause infections or worsen existing lung conditions. People with respiratory diseases, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), typically suffer from reduced protective systems, making it difficult to eliminate bacteria from the lungs.

## **Cancer**

Oral and pharyngeal (area that connects the nose and mouth) cancer is the sixth most common cancer reported worldwide and has one of the highest death rates. There are over 400,000 new cases reported in the world annually. 30,000 Americans are diagnosed with oral or pharyngeal cancer each year.

Patients undergoing chemotherapy and radiation are more prone to:

- dry mouth
- inflammation of the mouth tissue
- infection
- changes in taste
- impaired ability to eat, taste and speak

- abnormal dental development
- poor nutrition
- oral bleeding

Did you know?

Oral health is integral to general health, and quality of life, psychologically by influencing how you enjoy life, look, speak, chew, taste food and socialize, as well as affecting your feelings of social well-being.

Dental professionals are often the first to discover the initial signs of disease and will recommend further medical assessment.

How to Maintain Good Oral Health

- Drink fluoridated water and use fluoride toothpaste.
- Thoroughly brush with a soft toothbrush twice a day and floss to reduce dental plaque and prevent gingivitis.
- Visit a dental provider regularly.
- Eat wisely – avoid snacks with sugars and starches and limit the number of snacks eaten throughout the day. Also, eat the recommended five-a-day helping of fiber- rich fruits and vegetables.
- Individuals with diabetes should work to maintain control of their blood sugar; this will help prevent the complications of diabetes, including an increased risk of gum disease.
- Avoid tobacco and limit alcohol.
- Tell your dentist about your overall health, especially if you have had any recent illnesses or have any chronic conditions.
- Provide a health history including medication use, both prescription and over-the-counter products, and let your dentist know when there are changes

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