

Understanding the Mouth and Body Connection



HOW YOUR **ORAL HEALTH** AFFECTS YOUR **GENERAL HEALTH**



SAY *Ahh*
THINK MOUTH THINK HEALTH

Your mouth is a mirror to your body

A healthy mouth and a healthy body go hand in hand. It's important to understand the close relationship between oral health and general health – and the impact that one has on the other – to know how to protect your mouth and body at all ages.

ORAL HEALTH IS MUCH **MORE THAN A NICE SMILE**

A look into your mouth can reveal nutritional deficiencies, signs of other diseases, and unhealthy habits like tobacco or alcohol use – reflecting your general health and well-being.



A HEALTHY MOUTH

Allows you to speak, smile,
eat, drink – *and perform
other physical functions
throughout life* – and
can also boost social
interaction and promote
self-esteem.

AN UNHEALTHY MOUTH

Can cause discomfort,
pain, disease, and can
lead to social isolation and
lack of self-confidence,
as well as lost school or
work days.

Think Mouth, Think Health

ORAL HEALTH AND GENERAL HEALTH

HAVE A TWO-WAY RELATIONSHIP



Oral diseases take many shapes and forms, with the most common being tooth decay and gum disease. If not properly managed, they can negatively impact the rest of your body; which is why oral health is essential to general health and well-being at every stage of life.

General health conditions can also increase the risk of problems in the mouth. For example, oral diseases are linked with diabetes, heart disease, respiratory disease, and some cancers; while having diabetes increases the risk of getting gum disease.

Poor oral health can be the result, as well as the cause, of poor general health. 'Think Mouth, Think Health' by taking action to protect your oral health and help you safeguard your general health and quality of life.

Keeping your mouth
healthy is crucial for
maintaining your general
health and well-being

**ORAL
DISEASES
AFFECT**

3.9

**BILLION
PEOPLE
WORLDWIDE**

**CHRONIC
CONDITIONS
KILL**

39.5

**MILLION
PEOPLE
EVERY YEAR***

*(cancer: 8.8 million, diabetes: 1.6 million, heart disease: 17.7 million, respiratory disease: 3.9 million)**

THE MOUTH **CANNOT BE ISOLATED**

FROM THE REST OF THE BODY

**HEART
DISEASE**

17.7 MILLION*

**RESPIRATORY
DISEASE**

3.9 MILLION*

DIABETES

1.6 MILLION*

ORAL CANCER

CANCER

(including all cancers)

8.8 MILLION*

**PANCREATIC/
KIDNEY
CANCER**

**According to the WHO's Global Health Observatory data, of 56.4 million global deaths in 2015, 39.5 million were due to noncommunicable diseases. The leading causes were heart disease, cancers, respiratory disease and diabetes.*

Control common risk factors

MOST ORAL DISEASES **SHARE COMMON**

RISK FACTORS WITH OTHER DISEASES



Oral diseases share common risk factors with general health conditions. These risk factors are triggered by individual behaviour and lifestyle, like an unhealthy diet (particularly one high in sugar), tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, and poor oral hygiene. It's important to recognize that you can help prevent oral diseases, as well as other health conditions, by taking charge of your oral health.

It's never too early or too late to start looking after your mouth, your body will thank you



Eat healthy

Consuming too much sugar from snacks, processed food, and soft drinks is a major risk factor for oral disease (mainly tooth decay), as well as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. Excessive sugar consumption also causes serious dependence and promotes weight gain.



Don't use tobacco

Using tobacco in any form – smoking or smokeless – is unsafe and contributes to developing gum disease and oral cancer. Tobacco use also contributes to heart disease, respiratory disease, and other cancers, and is the leading cause of preventable death in the world.



Limit alcohol use

Drinking too much alcohol is a major risk factor for more than 200 diseases, including oral diseases globally and disability in developed economies. Alone or in combination with tobacco, excessive alcohol increases the risks for cancers of the mouth, gum disease and tooth decay (due to acidity and high sugar contents).



Brush twice a day

Having poor oral hygiene can lead to bacteria forming plaque in the mouth, and leaving the teeth and gums vulnerable to oral and other diseases. Long-term gum infection can eventually result in tooth loss, but it can also impact the control of other diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

Practice good oral care

Your mouth is a mirror to your body and reflects your general health and well-being



Protect your mouth and body from early in life by:

- eating a healthy diet *low in sugar, high in fruits and vegetables*
- avoiding tobacco use
- avoiding excessive alcohol consumption
- adopting good oral hygiene habits
 - *brush your teeth for two minutes, twice a day, using either a manual or electric toothbrush and a fluoride toothpaste*
 - *don't rinse with water straight after brushing, spit out any excess toothpaste instead*
 - *rinse with a fluoride mouthwash or chew sugar-free gum after meals and snacks when brushing isn't possible*
 - *clean between your teeth using floss or other interdental cleaners for additional benefits*
- wearing a mouthguard when engaging in contact sports
- having regular dental check-ups

Remember

Preventive care is always the best option, so seek early detection and treatment to fight oral diseases and associated general health conditions.



World Oral Health Day

20 March

Join a global movement

Activities such as public talks, screenings, walks and runs, concerts and much more are organized by FDI member dental associations and partners across the world.

Get
involved



/FDIWorldDentalFederation



/worldentalfed



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#SayAhh

#WOHD18



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