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Health Sunday Topic: Diabetes, Nutrition & Dental Health Management



Dentist, Edward J. Clemons DDS with Patient

Edward J. Clemons Jr. DDS of Clemons Cosmetic Dentistry in Durham recommends and states, “A dental checkup every 6 months can prevent and identify a variety of oral health problems. With regular dental examinations and proper nutrition, we can detect problems early and help you maintain your oral and overall health.”

A good dental check up includes reviewing medical history; cleaning teeth which removes plaque, tarter and bacteria; examining the soft and hard tissues and taking x-rays that shows decay between and inside the teeth and shows bone loss related to gum disease.

Diabetes is a disease that can affect the whole body, including your mouth. Dental care is important for people with diabetes because they face a higher than normal risk of oral infection problems due to poorly controlled blood sugars. The less well controlled the blood sugar, the more likely oral health problems will arise. This is because uncontrolled diabetes impairs white blood cells, which are the body's main defense against bacterial infections that can occur in the mouth.

People with Diabetes are at Higher Risk of Developing:

- Dry mouth. Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to sores, infection and tooth decay.
- Periodontal disease (gum inflammation and bone loss). If left untreated, it can lead to serious problems, including tooth loss. Constant high blood glucose levels are the main culprit, and high blood glucose levels can also lead to other oral conditions.
- Poor and slow healing of oral tissues.

It is extremely important to focus on the risk factors that you can change or manage with regular dental checkups and proper nutrition. **The keys are prevention and management!**

Food Intake and Nutrition Can Affect Diabetes and the Health of Teeth &Gums.

- Vitamin C and magnesium help reduce the risk of periodontal disease in people with diabetes by enhancing the body's immune response to infection and inflammation. A good source of vitamin C includes strawberries, citrus fruits and broccoli. A good source for magnesium is whole grains, almonds, spinach and beans.



- Calcium and vitamin D are also vital for good dental health. They help prevent bone and tooth loss and help in reducing inflammation in the gums. Vitamin D can be found in fortified milk, eggs, fortified cereals and salmon. Calcium sources include milk, yogurt, salmon and dark green vegetables. Don't overlook the importance of eating a balanced diet. A balanced diet is important for good oral health.

Veronica Ray, MD Internal Medicine at Lincoln Community Health Center states, “Part of being healthy is getting to and staying at a healthy weight - one that reduces your risk for many diseases, and can improve your health if you have diseases or conditions like oral disease, hypertension, heart disease, high cholesterol, and diabetes.”

Remember Your ABC's: ***A***lways have twice yearly dental checkups. ***B***alanced diet (limit sugary and starchy foods & drinks; limit between meal snacking; brush and floss) ***i***s vital for good dental health. ***C***heck your glucose.



Veronica Ray, MD

For More Information:

North Carolina Dental Health Fund
919-677-1397 (dental health for the underserved)
www.ncdental.org

National Dairy Council
(800) 426-8271
8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Friday (Central time)

www.blackdoctors.org

A message from your Community Health Coalition in partnership with North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Durham & Vicinity and Durham Regional Hospital.

REMEMBER Healthy People 2020: A Clear Vision to Healthy Living!