

Diabetes and Your Oral Health



Tips for Healthy Teeth and Gums





What do I need to know?

Managing diabetes involves more than monitoring blood sugar levels — it also involves taking care of your oral health, the health of your mouth. People with diabetes are at a higher risk for gum disease and other oral health issues, including dry mouth and oral infections. Additionally, having gum disease can complicate diabetes management and may lead to trouble controlling your blood sugar.

If you have diabetes, controlling your blood sugar, practicing good oral hygiene, and regularly visiting the dentist are key to maintaining your oral health.





What are signs of poor oral health?

- Swollen, bleeding, or receding gums (gum disease)
- Persistent bad breath
- Wounds in the mouth taking longer to heal
- Dry mouth
- White patches in the mouth (thrush)
- Tooth or gum pain
- Loose teeth

Nearly 22% of all people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes are affected by gum disease.¹

1. American Dental Association. Diabetes and dental health. MouthHealthy. Accessed January 15, 2025. <https://www.mouthhealthy.org/all-topics-a-z/diabetes>



Should I visit my dentist?

- Do you have red, bleeding, swollen, or painful gums?
- Do you have tooth pain?
- Do you have mouth dryness or irritation?
- Do you have trouble tasting your food?
- Do you often have bad breath?
- Has it been more than 12 months since your last dental checkup?
- Do you have any loose teeth?
- Do you have difficulty chewing?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, it is time for a dental checkup! Be sure to tell your dentist about your diabetes and current A1C level.





What can I do to maintain my oral health?

Make these habits part of your daily routine:

- Brush your teeth twice per day and floss daily.
- Have a balanced diet.
- Limit your intake of added sugar.
- Stay hydrated.
- Avoid tobacco and alcohol.
- Manage your blood sugar.
- Visit your dentist regularly.
- Watch for changes in your mouth between dental checkups.



For more information about diabetes, call **311** or visit **nyc.gov/health/diabetes**.

For more information on how to maintain your oral health, visit **nyc.gov/health/teeth**.

For help finding a low-cost dental provider near you, call **311** or visit **nyc.gov/health/map**. For help enrolling in or renewing health insurance, call **311** or 347-665-0214 or visit **nyc.gov/health/healthcoverage**.