

Oral Hygiene and Heart Health

You have a filthy mouth. In fact we all do. Think about it. The inside of your mouth is warm, wet, and dark--a perfect place for bacteria to grow. Go twenty-four hours without brushing your teeth and all the proof you need will be provided. Seriously, the mouth is a breeding ground for disease, and the health of your mouth affects the rest of your body. Your dentist knows this, as well. As an expert on the human mouth, a dentist has been trained to provide their patients a course of antibiotics before doing any kind of invasive work. Your dentist knows that should the bacteria in your mouth spread to the rest of your body, you could become very sick and possibly even die. There are many barriers to good oral health. More than 500 species of bacteria thrive in your mouth at any given time. Dying bacteria form plaque--a substance that sticks to teeth. Plaque produces substances that irritate the gums and provides a place for more bacteria to form. All this can lead to gum disease (gingivitis) which has become quite common. Currently, studies are being done to discover the role of oral hygiene in preterm birth, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. One of the organs most affected by oral health is the heart. A study in the Journal of Periodontology reported that periodontal disease increases the risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Doctors believe arteries inflamed with periodontal disease trap plaque which can lead to heart attacks and stroke. Each time we chew, our mouths can release toxins. Apparently individuals with gum disease release higher-than-normal levels of these toxins into the bloodstream.

About the Author

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