

What We Do

The National Aboriginal Diabetes Association works towards diabetes-free healthy communities. To achieve this vision we work with people, communities and organizations to:

- Raise awareness about diabetes and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada
- Advocate for programs and services for the prevention of type 2 and gestational diabetes among Aboriginal Peoples
- Advocate for programs and services for diabetes management for Aboriginal Peoples living with diabetes
- Promote healthy lifestyles to prevent the onset or complications of diabetes for Aboriginal Peoples

NADA.CA

Please visit our website to see our bi-monthly newsletters, find numerous community and organizational resources, check our calendar/events page, information about upcoming webinars, learn more about NADA, and get involved.

NADA has an agenda for change through holistic activities that will make a difference for Aboriginal Peoples affected by diabetes.

Diabetes and Dental Health

These 10 tips and facts will help you to maintain good dental hygiene:

- Brush your teeth last thing at night and at one other time in the day; the most important brush is the one at the end of the day
- Fluoride in toothpaste keeps the teeth strong and prevents dental decay
- To prevent dental decay you should reduce the frequency of sugary snacks and carbonated drinks
- After brushing spit out don't rinse the excess toothpaste – this will keep the active ingredients of the toothpaste on your teeth
- The mechanics of brushing your teeth makes it more effective at removing dental plaque and maintaining healthy gums than using mouthwash
- You should use interdental brushes or floss once a day to remove the plaque from in-between your teeth
- Water is the only drink that is advised to take to bed at night
- A timer can be useful to make sure you brush for a full 2 minutes
- If you are diagnosed with gum (periodontal) disease, your blood sugar control may be more difficult to manage, but effective gum treatment can help to improve it
- Your teeth and gums should be checked by a dentist at least once a year; they will advise how regularly you should attend the dentist or hygienist



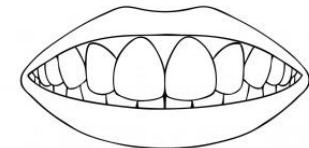
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Diabetes and Dental Health



The National Aboriginal Diabetes Association envisions diabetes-free healthy communities

www.nada.ca

Diabetes and Dental Health

People with diabetes who have poor control of their blood glucose levels are more likely to develop dental health problems. Therefore keeping your blood sugar within a normal range will reduce this risk. Eating a balanced diet, getting regular exercise and giving up smoking is also advised to lessen the risk of oral health problems.

Making sure that you visit a dentist every six months ensures that any infection will be treated as early as possible. Minor dental problems can quickly escalate, and a routine visit to the dentist can avoid these.

What are the Symptoms of Dental Health Problems?

- Sore or swollen gums
- Bleeding gums
- Receding gums
- Loose teeth
- Bad breath

You should visit your dentist if you experience any of these symptoms; urgent treatment might be required to prevent a problem from worsening.

Diabetes and Gum Diseases

Having prolonged high blood glucose levels can increase the risk of oral health problems, such as gum disease.

Diabetes and Gum Diseases

Gum disease, also known as periodontitis, is the sixth most common disease in the world. It occurs when bacteria within the mouth begins to form into a sticky plaque which sits on the surface of the tooth.

Gum disease is classified on the severity of its development. There are three stages of gum disease:

- **Gingivitis:** Gingivitis is the initial stage of gum disease, caused by poor oral hygiene and irregular plaque removal from teeth. It is characterised by swollen, red and tender gums and it can cause bleeding when brushing. Luckily gingivitis is reversible, and through improving your oral hygiene techniques and visiting your dentist or hygienist for advice on a home dental health care program, you should be able to reverse this process.
- **Periodontitis (Mild):** Untreated gingivitis can lead to mild periodontitis. The conversion of gingivitis to periodontitis is more common in people who have a family history of gum disease, poor oral hygiene and uncontrolled diabetes. At this stage there will be damage to the gums and bone supporting the teeth. In order to prevent further damage a prompt visit to the dentist is required to prevent further progression.
- **Periodontitis (Severe):** This is the most advanced stage of gum disease, characterised by significant tissue and bone loss around the teeth

Keeping your blood glucose levels within a normal range reduces the risk of infection spreading.

Unfortunately, when your body begins to fight an infection, blood glucose levels will usually rise in response. Should the infection in your mouth become worse, you could have problems with food intake, which might affect your diabetes management.

Your dentist can help you with your diabetes if you have developed gum disease or another mouth infection.

Dental Treatment and Blood Sugar Levels

If dental work requires you to take special precautions (such as not eating for a short period), you should ensure that this won't affect your treatment regime.

If you are on medication that can lead to hypos, such as insulin or sulphonylureas, speak with your dentist or your doctor to see if your medication will need to be modified before the dental work.

High blood sugar levels may affect the time the teeth and gums take to heal. If dental work is taking an unusually long time to heal, you should immediately contact your diabetes healthcare team or dentist for advice.



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