



Think about it...

- More than 75 percent of those over age 35 will be affected by some form of periodontal (gum) disease.¹
- Poor oral health can make diabetes more difficult to control, resulting in infections that lead to higher blood-sugar levels.²
- Those with untreated periodontal disease have up to a two-fold increased risk for heart disease.³
- Advanced gum disease affects four to 12 percent of adults.⁴
- By looking in the mouth, a dentist can detect more than 120 disease symptoms.⁵
- Pregnant women with gum disease may be seven times more likely to deliver premature, low-birth-weight babies.⁶

¹ M.P. McQueen. "Health Plans Expand Dental Benefits," The Wall Street Journal, 2006.

² MayoClinic.com

³ "Periodontal Diseases – what you need to know," The American Academy of Periodontology, 2006.

⁴ www.CDC.gov

⁵ "Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General," 2000.

⁶ Jeffcoat MK, Geurs NC, Reddy MS, Cliver SP, Goldenberg RL, Hauth JC. "Periodontal infection and preterm birth: Results of a prospective study." J Am Dent Assoc. 2001 Jul; 132(7):875-80/Lopez NJ, Smith PC, Gutierrez J. "Higher risk of preterm birth and low birth weight in women with periodontal disease". J Dent Res. 2002 Jan; 81(1):5 8-63/Jeffcoat MK, Hauth JC, Geurs NC, Reddy MS, Cliver SP, Hodgkins PM, Goldenberg RL. "Periodontal disease and preterm birth: Results of a pilot interventional study." J Periodontal. 2003 Aug; 74(8):1214-1218.

Coronary Artery Disease

Researchers have found that people with periodontal or gum disease are almost twice as likely to suffer from coronary artery disease as those without gum disease. There are several current theories of how this happens. When bacteria from the mouth enter the blood vessels, they attach to fatty proteins and may lead to blood clots and plaque build-up. Inflammation caused by periodontal disease could also increase plaque build-up, which may cause arteries to narrow and harden. Gum disease can also exacerbate existing heart conditions.

Diabetes

The relationship between periodontal disease and diabetes goes both ways. Those with diabetes are more susceptible to periodontal disease, and periodontal disease may increase blood sugar levels and complications for those already living with diabetes. Periodontal disease may also increase the progression of prediabetes and can increase insulin resistance and disrupt glycemic control.

Pregnancy

Pregnant women may notice gums that are red, tender and likely to bleed. This condition is known as pregnancy gingivitis and occurs when rising hormone levels make the gums more sensitive to plaque – the sticky film of bacteria that forms on teeth.



Can Healthy
Gums
Protect
Your Whole
Body?



Working for a Healthier Hawaii

Did you know that dental health can have an influence on the development of conditions such as diabetes, coronary artery disease (CAD) and low-birth-weight, premature babies? An undeniable relationship exists between a healthy mouth and overall good health. That means it's more important than ever to get regular preventive dental care that will help you maintain not only your good oral health, but your good health in general.

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) is committed to our community and the health of its members, that's why we support a three-tiered approach to optimum oral care called Oral Health for Total Health. Because we offer medical and dental coverage, we're able to analyze claims information and identify members who can benefit from focused attention and additional dental education.

The three tiers include:

- Informing our members about the connection between oral and overall health
- Educating our members with CAD or diabetes about the benefits of good oral health
- Engaging in targeted intervention for select members with CAD or diabetes who are not maintaining their oral health and sharing the importance of following up with their provider and making an appointment

We analyze our dental and medical claims data and identify, reach out to and educate members with specific health conditions who can benefit from oral health programs and services.



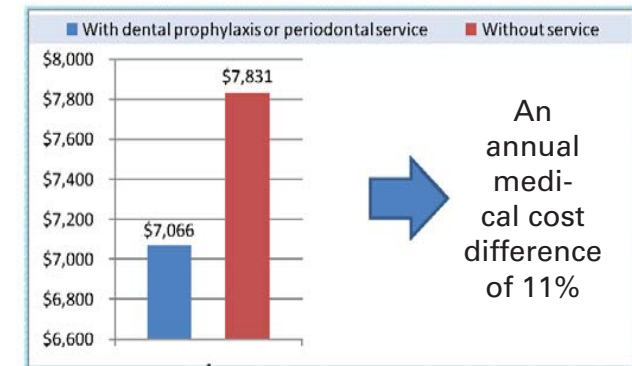
Consider the research...

A two-year study by the Columbia University College of Dental Medicine found that early periodontal treatment reduced overall annual medical costs:

- 9 percent for patients with diabetes
- 16 percent for patients with heart disease

We compiled a random sampling of HMSA health and dental members with CAD or diabetes who did and did not receive preventive or periodontal dental treatment during a one-year period. The results of this sampling were similar to the Columbia University College of Dental Medicine study for those members who visited a dentist and received preventive treatment:

- Patients with CAD and diabetes had a medical cost difference of 11 percent.



Tips for Good Oral Health



Preventive dental care can help you maintain not only your oral health, but can also help your overall well-being.

- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, and floss every day to remove debris between teeth.
- Get regular dental check-ups. Dental professionals can remove tartar from your teeth and treat small problems before they become larger ones.
- Limit sodas, coffee and alcohol and eat a well-balanced diet. Limiting these beverages and sugary foods helps reduce tooth decay and discoloration.
- Use a fluoride mouthwash.
- Quit smoking. According to the American Cancer Society, smokers are seven times more likely to develop gum disease.