



## The Mouth and Body Connection

Taking good care of your mouth and smile can safeguard your overall health and well-being. That's because many oral diseases can influence health conditions outside your mouth and vice versa. The relationship between your mouth and the rest of your body is called the 'mouth-body connection.'

Your mouth is full of many kinds of microorganisms, including bacteria. Thankfully, most of them are harmless and practicing good oral hygiene can help reduce the amount of bad bacteria in your mouth. But if you do have too much bad bacteria in your mouth, they can create acids and cause inflammation that lead to oral infections like tooth decay and gum disease.

In this video, kids will learn directly from a registered dental hygienist all about some of the best ways they can take care of their teeth and mouths and why there is such a big connection between their mouths and the rest of their bodies.

First, the hygienist will talk about why the dentist will do an oral exam during a regular checkup. An oral exam gives the dentist or hygienist the chance to review the health of your mouth and they can even identify over 120 diseases that have signs and symptoms in the mouth.

Next, the hygienist will talk about the different systems of the body and how the health of your mouth can play a role in the health of the rest of your body, including your heart, circulatory system, brain, and more.

As you watch the video you can talk with your class about some of the best ways to protect your mouth and overall health. Here are a few key ways to keep your mouth healthy:

- Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and a soft-bristled toothbrush for two minutes each time
- Floss daily
- Replace your toothbrush or toothbrush head every three to four months or sooner if your bristles fray or spread out
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet that limits sugary and starchy foods and drinks