



Oral and Overall Health

Taking good care of your smile is good for you from head to toe. That's because oral health is connected to overall health.

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 periodontal (gum) disease.

In this video, kids will learn why the risk for heart disease is greater for people who also have gum disease. Gum disease has also been linked to diabetes, low birth weight and premature birth.

As you watch this video, you might want to pause the video to talk about what gum disease is. This will provide good context for the video.

Here is some good supporting information about gum disease:

- Gum disease refers to infections of the gum and bone tissues surrounding your teeth.
- This kind of infection is also known by the technical names of gingivitis and periodontal disease.
- Gum diseases are usually caused by poor oral health habits that allow sticky, bacteria-filled plaque to build up on the teeth.
- If it remains long enough, the bacteria releases toxins that infect the gums and eventually affect the bone supporting the teeth.

This infection typically causes irritation, redness and swelling along the gum line. If plaque is not removed from the teeth daily, then minerals in your saliva can transform that plaque into tartar. The presence of tartar can make it very difficult to clean your teeth properly and increase your risk for periodontal disease.