

DIABETES & ORAL HEALTH

There are more bacteria in your mouth right now than there are people on Earth. If those germs settle into your gums, you've got gum disease. Unfortunately, if you have diabetes, you are at higher risk for gum problems.

If I Have Diabetes, am I at Risk for Dental Problems?

If your blood glucose levels are poorly controlled, you are more likely to develop serious gum disease and lose more teeth than non-diabetics. Like all infections, serious gum disease may be a factor in causing blood sugar to rise and may make diabetes harder to control.

Other oral problems associated to diabetes include: thrush, an infection caused by fungus that grows in the mouth, and dry mouth which can cause soreness, ulcers, infections and cavities.

How Can I Help Prevent Dental Problems Associated with Diabetes?

First and foremost, control your blood glucose level. Then, take good care of your teeth and gums, along with regular checkups every six months. To control thrush, a fungal infection, maintain good diabetic control, avoid smoking and, if you wear them, remove and clean dentures daily. Good blood glucose control can also help prevent or relieve dry mouth caused by diabetes.

What Can I Expect at My Checkup? Should I Tell My Dentist About My Diabetes?

People with diabetes have special needs and your dentist and hygienist are equipped to meet those needs—with your help. Keep your dentist and hygienist informed of any changes in your condition and any medication you might be taking. Postpone any non-emergency dental procedures if your blood sugar is not in good control.

If I cannot afford to see a dentist, where do I go to receive oral health care to control my diabetes?

You may be eligible to become a patient at HealthLink Dental Clinic, a free dental clinic for low-income, working adults and veterans living in Bucks County & Montgomery County.

If you answer "yes" to these questions, you may qualify for free dental care:

- Are you 18 years of age or older?
- Do you live in Bucks or Montgomery County?
- Are you or your spouse/ domestic partner employed (full-time, part-time, or seasonally)? Or are you a military veteran?
- Does your household earn within 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines? (See table to right)

For more information or to set up an eligibility appointment, call HealthLink Dental Clinic at (215) 364-4247. You can also visit the clinic's webpage at www.healthlinkdental.org

2018 Household Income Limits

People in Household	Maximum Household Income
1	\$30,350
2	\$41,150
3	\$51,950
4	\$62,750
5	\$73,550
6	\$84,350
7	\$95,150
8	\$105,950

Information from: <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/treatment-and-care/oral-health-and-hygiene/diabetes-and-oral-health.html>



HealthLink Dental Clinic

1775 Street Rd – Southampton, PA 18966

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