



DENTAL

# Preventive dental care could help decrease your risk of strokes

Certain conditions such as stroke may be linked to dental health. In fact, the bacteria present in gum diseases may contribute to your stroke risk.



## How dental health affects the risk of a stroke

Gum disease occurs when the tissue around your teeth becomes infected. Bacteria found in gum disease and the inflammation it causes can increase the risk for a heart attack or stroke. Also, if left untreated, gum disease can damage the gums and bone around your teeth and eventually may cause tooth loss.



## What can you do?

Get your preventive care, available for no additional cost when you see an in-network provider. Make regular dental visits a priority. And if you are at risk for a stroke, it's important to tell your dentist, including any medications that you are currently taking. A dentist may be able to recognize early oral hygiene problems that you can't see, and provide appropriate treatment to help slow the progression of gum disease.

Practice good dental care every day. Dental care is always important, but even more of a priority for those at risk for a stroke.



## Tips to help ensure a healthy mouth:

- Use a soft-bristled toothbrush
- Choose toothpaste with fluoride
- Brush for at least two minutes twice a day
- Floss daily
- Watch for signs of periodontal disease such as red, swollen, or tender gums
- Visit a dentist regularly for exams and cleanings

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