

**DENTAL DEPOT**  
Jeffrey Hauger, DDS  
Kevin Williamson, DDS

2 E 5<sup>th</sup> St, Morris, MN 56267  
(320) 589-4481  
www.dentaldepotmorris.com

## **Mouth Care for People with Diabetes**

People with diabetes face special challenges in keeping a healthy mouth and white smile.

### **Why worry about mouth care?**

- Bacteria feed on high sugar levels in saliva. If you have diabetes, bacteria can easily grow in your mouth and cause infection
- Blood vessels change as diabetes progresses. This weakens your resistance to infection.
- Gingivitis can develop when teeth are not cleaned well enough. Gingivitis causes redness or bleeding of the gums.
- Periodontitis is a more serious infection that occurs in bone and soft tissue below the gum line.
- Mouth infection can lead to loose or lost teeth, pain while chewing, and high blood sugar levels. If untreated, infection can spread to the blood.
- Fungal infections (also called “thrush”) can develop as a result of high blood sugar levels. People with dentures or partial dentures have a greater risk of fungal infection.

### **You can prevent mouth problems by:**

- Visiting your dentist at least twice a year. Remind dental staff that you have diabetes. Ask your dentist which products are best for you to use.
- Using toothpaste that is recommended by the American Dental Association (ADA).
- Not using mouthwash unless your dentist instructs you to.
- Brushing your teeth at least twice a day, for at least three minutes, using a soft bristle brush. Battery operated toothbrushes are also good to use.
- Using your toothbrush to gently stroke the insides of your cheeks and your tongue. This helps remove bacteria that can collect and cause infections and bad breath.
- Replacing your toothbrush every three months. Germs can grow on bristles, so toss your toothbrush after an illness and after having a cold sore.
- Flossing daily to remove bits of food trapped below the gum line that brushing alone cannot remove. Waxed dental floss can be easier to use.
  - Make a C-shape/U-shape/fishing hook around each tooth and go up and down three times
- If you have dentures, keep them very clean. Brush them twice daily using a denture brush and tap water, or with a mild detergent.
  - Leave them out at night
  - Soak them in water or an ADA approved cleaning solution
  - Visit your dentist yearly re-evaluate dentures and also for oral cancer screening
- Do NOT smoke or chew tobacco. Tobacco increases risk of infection.