Menopause is Wrecking your Mouth - Here's What Dentists Aren't Telling You Transcript

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Menopause and Oral Health Overview

Hot flashes and mood swings get all the attention. But what does menopause do to your mouth? Menopause can lead to low saliva in the mouth, to burning gums, bleeding gums, and even gum recession and bone loss.

These are all things that are so important to understand. We often forget about the mouth when we're worried about menopause and hormone changes, but keep watching because I'm going to talk about what it does to your mouth and how to help.

If you're experiencing some strange mouth symptoms that you've not had in the past and you're at that certain time of life where you're thinking about menopause, then it's really important to think perhaps this is hormone related.

I see so many women who are going through this time of life. I'm right there with you and things are different than they used to be. all of a sudden the oral hygiene that you used to do isn't seeming to keep up and you get new cavities.

I remember one woman in particular, she was so incredibly meticulous with her oral health and I saw her every six months on the dot. She never missed an appointment.

So everything was great.

Hormone Changes and New Dental Problems

One visit and I saw her again in six months and she had six cavities all along the gum line. I asked, what's changed? And she said, nothing. I'm eating exactly the same.

I'm drinking exactly the same. I am using the exact same toothpaste and mouthwash. I mean, nothing had changed about what she was doing. But then she sat there and she said, but I'm also at that time of life.

You know, she was in her mid fifties. She said, do you think that maybe menopause has something to do with it? The answer is yes. So how does menopause affect your mouth?

Well, the biggest change that happens in menopause is a change in hormones, particularly a decrease in estrogen. Well, estrogen does a lot of really great things for a woman's body.

It helps saliva production. It helps encourage that salivary production. That's a big one. And we'll talk about that one. The other thing it does is it really supports soft tissues and decreases inflammation.

So now we've dealt with saliva, we've dealt with gums. The other thing it does is it affects and influences bone health. So now we're talking about jawbones.

Well, we always think about how this affects us overall, but let's talk about all three of those things. First of all, saliva. Saliva is the natural protectant in the mouth.

It comes into the mouth to wash away bacteria, to wash away food particles, and to actually raise the pH in the mouth so it's not so acidic. If saliva is not there, first of all, it's a little uncomfortable.

How Estrogen Affects Saliva, Gums, and Bone

And I myself have even noticed this a bit. I find myself needing a little bit more water or kind of licking my lips a little bit more, that kind of thing.

Well, saliva is so crucial to prevent tooth decay. and prevent gum disease. So if your saliva is dropping, bacteria sits on the teeth longer. That plaque stays there longer, saliva doesn't wash it away, and it makes you more prone to tooth decay, particularly along the gum line.

because that's where plaque congregates and underneath old crowns, underneath old fillings. Why? Because it's really difficult to clean in those areas.

So we see an increase in tooth decay along the gum line and underneath old dental work at about this time of life. I'll get to what to do about it in a minute, but let's talk about the next thing with gum tissue.

So again, estrogen is great at making everything more flexible, all of your tissues more flexible, and it helps to control inflammation in the tissues.

So you may see symptoms elsewhere of low estrogen with brittle skin and dry skin. The same thing goes for the mouth. So if you have lower saliva, lower estrogen, we see bleeding gums more frequently.

Bleeding gums leads to more gum recession, more gum inflammation. So if you've had amazing gums and all of a sudden now as you've hit menopause, you're seeing gum recession, your gums bleed a little more easily, this is a low estrogen symptom.

The third one is bone changes, because again, estrogen is really important in the way that our bodies maintain bone density. Without it, we don't maintain bone density the same.

We end up with osteoporosis in the long bones and other bones in the body, and we ended up with bone loss in the jaw. Why does that matter? Bone holds teeth in.

So if you're losing jawbone, you're gonna lose teeth. All of these things are so important. So let's talk about what do we actually do about it. First of all, let's start with those teeth.

You have got to make sure that those teeth, that all of your teeth have an armor coating on them.

Protecting Teeth With Minerals and Hydroxyapatite

So that even if saliva is lowering because of hormonal changes, they are so cavity resistant. How do you do this? It's all about minerals. This is also going to impact your bones for the good.

So pay attention here. You need more minerals in and you need more minerals on the outside. So the minerals in piece. First of all, I recommend tooth and bone formula.

What it is, is it's bone and tooth specific minerals. The things that your bone teeth need to grow and be strong. The second thing you need to pair that with is vitamin D3 and vitamin K2.

Why? Well, vitamin D3 take minerals out of circulation and vitamin K2 put them into cells. So you can have all the minerals in the world, but if you don't have those two vitamins, you're not going to get them into the cells and where you need them to go.

So that's on the inside, tooth and bone formula, vitamin D3, K2. On the outside, you need hydroxyapatite. What is that? It's simply the mineral complex the teeth are made of.

So I recommend tooth powder, or toothpaste that contains hydroxyapatite, followed by a mouthwash that contains hydroxyapatite. And I need you to do this right before you go to bed.

That's often the time when your teeth are most susceptible. saliva in the mouth drops during sleep already and if you have even less saliva because of low estrogen this is really a dangerous time for you.

So right before you go to bed you're going to brush with a hydroxyapatite tooth product and then rinse with a hydroxyapatite tooth product and you're going to do the again first thing in the morning.

You really need to build up and protect those teeth. Now from an inflammation standpoint, how do you help that? And a saliva stimulating standpoint. Well, I have a fabulous mouthwash that includes something called marshmallow root.

Marshmallow root naturally stimulates saliva as well as creating kind of a layer on the teeth that you don't necessarily feel but allows all of that good healing hydroxyapatite to stay right up against the teeth and the gums.

So for saliva absolutely you're going to use something that has hydroxyapatite because they are going to again just give hydroxyapatite to your mouth when it's dry.

You can also find some herbals like marshmallow root that are good at naturally stimulating saliva. How about that gum tissue? All of the things that I just described with saliva are also going to help your gum tissue.

Supporting Saliva and Gum Health

I have a gum health mouthwash that's particularly good because it has something called protectin that's a prebiotic. What it's doing is encouraging good bacteria to grow and killing off the bad bacteria.

So it's going to keep your mouth in balance. Isn't that what we want when we're going through menopause is just that balance that we seem to all be lacking right now.

I remember a woman, her name was Jackie and she was really struggling with gum disease. She actually was type one diabetic. So she already had a predisposition to this, but then she hit about 55 years old and things went drastically downhill.

She started losing all sorts of bone around the teeth and the gums will follow. So she was having massive gum recession and she was really nervous. She was going to lose all of her teeth.

And honestly, she was heading there. So what did we do? We first of all got her immediately on the tooth and bone formula, the vitamin D3K2, and started her using the hydroxyapatite tooth patter and mouthwash.

Minerals in, minerals out. You have to do this. The other thing you really need is you need somebody talking about this when you're in the dental office.

So if you are visiting a dentist that doesn't talk about hormones, that doesn't even acknowledge the fact that things have changed for you, then it's time to find a new dentist.

You can find one that knows these things on my directory at livingwellwithdrmichelle.com. Go to the directory, give them a call and say, what do you know about how menopause affects your overall health and particularly the mouth?

Finding Hormone-Aware Dental Care

What can I do to help myself with this? Because our bodies, we deserve somebody who has some ideas for us and can really support us through these different times of life.

It's interesting because years ago, there was a researcher named Dr. Melvin Page, and he researched the impact that hormones have on cavities and on oral health.

Unfortunately, his research, clear from the 1940s, has kind of fallen on deaf ears in the dental community at large. So find somebody that has paid attention to this research and knows what to do about it.

This is worth finding out about because your mouth health is so crucial for your overall health and your hormones do have a part to play, but there are things to do to make sure that you are balanced and writing out every single phase of your life.

Thank you for watching. Hopefully this helps you to live well at any time of life.