The Shocking Link Between Gum Disease & Chronic Illness – How Inflammation is Ruining Your Health Transcript

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Gum Disease and Whole-Body Health

Did you know that your bleeding gums might be silently causing disease in your brain, in your joints, in your body in general? Stick with me because what you learn in this video may just save your health.

Now the connection between gum disease and overall health isn't new. Actually research studies connecting these things together have been around for decades.

This is the most researched thing inside of dentistry and even general mainstream dentists are quick to acknowledge the connection between gum health and overall health.

In fact, for years, the American Heart Association has recommended that people who have a joint replacement done or a heart valve replacement, that they actually have antibiotics before treatment if you're going to have dental work done.

Why? because they know that the bacteria that live in your mouth particularly love hearts, they love joints, and they love brains. This is not new information, but what is new is what we do about it.

I have seen so many patients who have bleeding gums and they think, this is just normal, right? A little pink in the sink is kind of the joke that this is normal.

It's not normal. If you were to just brush against your hand and it started to bleed, would you be concerned? Of course you would because we know that this skin tissue is stable.

It doesn't bleed when it's healthy. The same thing goes for your gums.

Signs of Gum Disease to Watch For

Your gums don't bleed when they're healthy. So some of the signs and symptoms to look for are bleeding gums. That's the first one that everybody sees quite quickly.

redness, swelling, tenderness, those are other things you might not notice just you know right off the bat but you might think this is a little redder than normal.

Bad breath is another one as is gum recession. All of these things are signs that you need to pay attention to because that infection that's living here isn't staying there.

There are scores of research articles. I'm talking hundreds of research articles that are showing that the infection in the mouth, bacteria flourishing in the mouth, leads to Alzheimer's disease, leads to diabetes, leads to kidney disease, to lung infection.

We already talked about hearts. It can lead to all sorts of heart conditions, cardiovascular disease. It can also lead to low birth weight babies. Bleeding gums in pregnancy isn't normal either.

All of these things show up every single day in my practice. I'll always remember one patient, his name was James. He came because his wife was really concerned about his bad breath, but also he was starting to get literally loose teeth.

How Gum Infection Affects Teeth and Health

His teeth were moving, I call it, you know, shaking in the breeze a little bit. So we looked in his mouth, And I remember feeling a little discouraged and disappointed when I looked in his mouth because I knew I was going to have to tell him he was going to lose some teeth.

He kind of saw it coming. He knew that this might happen. So we looked and we decided which of these teeth were savable and which weren't. He had rapidly advancing gum disease.

Why does gum disease lead to losing teeth? Well, gum disease creates infection locally around the teeth. now the bone doesn't like that infection so what it does is it shrinks away if enough bone shrinks away there's no bone holding the tooth anymore and you literally can lose a perfectly good tooth with no problem because there's simply no foundation to hold it in place anymore well that's the situation james was in but not only that the other reason his wife sent him in is because he had crazy high high blood pressure.

Now James had no other risk factors. He wasn't overweight. He ate a good diet. He exercised regularly. He did all the things that every doctor tells you to do.

But this gum disease was leading to his high blood pressure and his other problems with his heart. He also was sleeping terribly, was hardly sleeping an hour at nighttime.

And he just looked haggard. His skin was kind of grayish. His eyes were bloodshot. He felt absolutely miserable. He really told us, he said, I feel 20 years older than I am.

So when we told him, you're going to lose, I remember correctly, I think it was six teeth, you're going to lose six teeth, he was sad. He was disappointed in himself that he hadn't gotten on top of this sooner, but he was glad if it meant he was going to feel better.

That's not the case for everyone. You don't have to lose teeth if we can get on this early, if we can stop the advancing disease. So we removed the teeth.

We treated all of the rest of the gums. We cleaned up all of the infection. We cleaned off all the tartar that was leading to some of this infection. And I remember seeing him, it was about three months down the road because my hygienists were doing a lot of the treatment.

They were seeing him, cleaning things up, encouraging him. I saw him three months down the road. I almost didn't recognize him. He looked younger. He had a spring in his step.

His eyes weren't bloodshot anymore.

Jamesu2019s Recovery After Gum Treatment

He really literally looked like a new person. And all that had changed was this infection was gone. But as I talked to him, I said, well, what's changed for you from a health standpoint?

And he said, I've had to cut my high blood pressure medication in half because my heart is responding and doing the things it's supposed to now. And his goal was to completely get rid of it within another three months time.

So these are the kinds of effects that we see when we treat gum disease. It's life changing. So what can you do at home to treat this? Well, we need to first start with what is gum disease even?

What is causing this? Well, gum disease is a bacterial infection. So along those lines, is it transmissible? Can you actually get this from someone? The answer is yes.

Gum disease is a transmissible infection. If you are kissing someone who has it, if you are sharing a spoon or a, you know, a cup or anything with someone that has gum disease, you can actually be infected because there are particular bacteria and some other things.

There's spirochetes, there's a bunch of other crazy bugs that live in the mouth when it's infected. and when it's actively infected. We all have bacteria in our mouth all the time.

A lot of them there for good reasons, but there are some that are very destructive. So those are the ones that you can pass on. So if you also have a significant other that you might be sharing some things with, make sure that they also don't have gum disease, otherwise it may infect you.

So what are you going to do? Well, we need to control that bacteria. How are you going to do that? The first thing you do is you don't want to damage the gums or make them even less resistant to bacterial insult or invasion.

A lot of traditional oral care products will do that. Alcohol is very drying and damaging to the tissues, and most mouth rinses that are on the market are alcohol-based.

Those that aren't alcohol-based have strong disinfectants in them, which kill all bacteria, good and bad. We don't want this. So I really recommend a mouthwash that includes a natural disinfectant.

We have a great one that does exactly that. Our mouthwash also contains prebiotics. Why would we want a prebiotic? Because we want to encourage good bacterial growth and discourage bad bacterial growth.

How Gum Disease Spreads and Why It Matters

The next thing you're going to want to do is from a tooth care, toothpaste standpoint. You're not going to use anything with triclosan. Why? What is triclosan?

It's a broad spectrum antimicrobial. Basically, it's what they're going to use like a hand sanitizer, those kinds of things. Again, killing off everything good and bad.

The good is the problem. You don't want to use anything that has a high abrasive component of any variety. You don't want to use something that has a detergent called sodium lauryl sulfate.

These are very irritating to the gum tissue. So those things are not necessary. You need to use a product where when you read the ingredient label, you actually know what every single thing is.

And it's something that you would readily put in your mouth. So check out our tooth care products, whether it's tooth powder, toothpaste, mouthwash. This is the reason I developed them, because I couldn't find ones that I liked.

What do you do from a nutritional standpoint? So you want to encourage good gum health. Three really important considerations here. Number one is vitamin C.

This is actually the very best thing to do for better gum health is vitamin C. In all forms, this is an interesting story. There were sailors that would sail across the Atlantic Ocean.

They were all having loose teeth and bleeding gums. Gum disease, right? What were they deficient in? Vitamin C, because they were on these long voyages.

They started bringing pickled limes, lime juice, different things on board, and it cured this problem. So you need a lot of vitamin C. You also need a lot of vitamin D3 and K2.

We like those together. Those are going to be very beneficial for tissue health along with minerals. So now we've talked about What do we want to do from just a health standpoint?

At-Home Oral Care and Product Choices

How do we take care of our teeth? How do we nourish the body correctly? But the other thing I want you to think

about is how can you feed yourself in order to keep your gums well?

So that vitamin D3K2 can come in certain foods. Butter is one of my very favorites. Grass-fed butter is very good, as are fatty fishes, things that have those naturally occurring compounds.

Vitamin C, where do we get that? We get that from citrus fruits, from berries, from bell peppers. These are all wonderful sources of natural vitamin C.

I actually prefer to get my vitamins from food if possible. That is what I want you to load up on. What do I not want you to drink or eat? a lot of acidic beverages.

Acidic beverages are very, very hard on gum tissue as well as tooth tissue. So what does that mean? That means sodas. That means energy drinks. That means a lot of electrolytes actually and even lemon water.

These things are very acidic. I want you to drink them and be done with them and switch to something that's more alkaline or neutral based. So that would be water or an alkaline-based beverage.

We actually have an electrolyte that is alkaline-based for this reason. So you're gonna feed your body foods that help those gums be healthy, also keep your mouth healthy, that don't distract or damage anything, and you're gonna take care of your teeth in a way that the gums can actually hold onto the tooth, there's no bacterial overload or overgrowth, and those gums are healthy again.

So what are you going to notice when this happens? Pink, healthy gum tissue. No bleeding in the sink after you brush. Everything is resilient, meaning you're not getting swelling and gum recession and all those kinds of things.

Nutrition for Healthier Gums

Do you need to see the dentist to help with this? Yes. If you have gum disease, that's the first place you're gonna go. They're going to do a full gum exam.

They're gonna measure every single gum. Around every single tooth, we measure six numbers. Make sure that's happening. They're not doing a complete gum exam unless that's happening.

And we're going to measure progress. So we're going to see you. We're going to clean everything off. We're going to treat it with ozone in our office because that's going to naturally kill bugs and balance things.

We're going to then see you again within 90 days. Why? Those bacteria come back in 90 days. We have to get them off again until things stabilize. From a health standpoint, what might you notice?

We see a decrease in high blood pressure issues and other heart conditions. We see stabilization during pregnancy. No bleeding gums anymore. Hormones are a little bit more balanced.

We see all of these things that we talked about, Alzheimer's and joint pain. We just see less of it because the body is in better condition, is in better health overall.

The gums are so important to pay attention to. Not only is it an indicator of things going on here, but they are an indicator of things going on elsewhere.

Your dentist should be the first stop when you have health concerns, and absolutely the first stop if you have bleeding gums. If you want to know more about everything that I've discussed on here, please make sure you subscribe, check out our website Living Well with Dr.

Michelle, also our practice Total Care Dental in American Fork, Utah. We would love to help your mouth, your gums, and all of you stay well.