Why Gum Disease is more Dangerous than Cavities! Transcript

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Gum Disease and Heart Risk

Do you think cavities are the worst thing that could happen to your mouth? Well, actually think again. Something far more serious involving heart attacks and strokes is directly correlated with gum disease.

I see a lot of patients every single day and it's really concerning when I see someone young that has had a heart attack. So we're always looking at all of the factors that can contribute.

And a lot of the clots that actually do the killing with heart attacks and strokes have mouth-specific bacteria in them. So I'm not going to be able to tell you exactly your heart attack was from gum disease, but I am going to tell you you are much more likely to have a heart attack because of gum disease.

And this is what I share every single day with our patients. I remember I had a patient specifically who had really high cholesterol. Cholesterol is the body sign that something's out of whack.

There's a lot of inflammation going on. She actually had infection removed from her mouth. And within a week's time, her cholesterol dropped 90 points.

Why? Because the inflammation had decreased in all of her vessels and her entire circulatory system. So it didn't need as much cholesterol to keep her healthy and happy anymore.

So again, we see these stories over and over and over. People who have unhealthy hearts, unhealthy brains, unhealthy circulatory systems, and a huge contributor is the gum disease.

So how does this work? Well, gum disease is an infection in your mouth and that infection never stays put.

How Oral Infection Affects the Body

So it doesn't just stay right here. And those bacteria really damage blood vessels as they're traveling throughout the body. They create inflammation.

That inflammation triggers your body to go and fix something. So it goes to the area and the inflammatory markers or the inflammatory mechanisms that it sends to the area create swelling, create redness.

create heat they're just trying to protect your body and to heal what's going on but all of that inflammation is actually damaging if it never stops and that's the problem with gum disease is it's a long lasting persistent infection so it's constantly creating this inflammation in the body which leads to constant damage to the blood vessels well again The body tries to fix this, so it throws these tarps of connective tissue over.

It tries to heal things. Well, all of that healing creates tissue that blocks the arteries. This is what we call plaque buildup or blocked arteries, blocked problems that can lead to literal clots, stopping the flow of blood through these vessels.

So what do you do about it? And how do you know if this might be a concern? There has been research showing that blood clots that actually killed people because of heart attacks, because of strokes, that they have a large amount of mouth specific bacteria in them.

In fact, you're twice as likely to have a heart attack if you have gum disease. This is a pretty serious deal. I see patients all the time that have had heart attacks, sometimes early, early on in their 50s or even earlier.

Tartar, Bacteria, and Inflammation

And they say, am I just waiting for the next heart attack to hit? What can I do about this? So we look at two things strongly, but the first is gum disease.

The second is also airway. We're not going to talk about that in this video, but that's also a consideration. So let's go back to the gum disease piece.

Gum disease is literal bacterial growths in the mouth due to a couple of things. Usually it's due to tartar collecting on the teeth. And what is tartar?

It's simply bacterial plaque, that, you know, fuzzy stuff that you can scrape off your teeth. If it doesn't get removed within 24 hours or so after getting on the tooth, it will start to calcify with just minerals in your saliva naturally.

Now calcification makes it harder to get off. So that's why you come to the dentist to have them scrape it off. That's the tartar. Well, if the tartar stays on the teeth, bacteria have a place to hide now.

You're not able to clean it very easily or very simply. and those bacteria then have byproducts. They have things that they produce as they eat sugar, as they metabolize things.

Those are called endotoxins and they're very inflammatory. So they drop them onto the gums, the gums get inflamed, the gums pull away, all of that inflammation and the bacteria spread throughout the system.

So this is a big deal, but the great thing about it is it's so treatable. So what are signs that you need to pay attention to? Bleeding gums, sore gums, Although oftentimes gum disease doesn't hurt.

It's kind of a silent and deadly killer of teeth and of people. So you need to make sure you're paying attention to the things you can notice. Red gums, gums pulling away, so gum recession.

Sometimes you'll find sensitive teeth where those gums have receded. All of these things are signs that you need to pay attention to.

Signs of Gum Disease and Treatment

So people will ask, well, do I really need to get my teeth cleaned? The answer is yes, because what are we removing? Those hardened deposits called tartar that are on the teeth where the bacteria hide.

We have to get rid of those. Now on a rare occasion, we're gonna see someone that has gum disease, that doesn't have a lot of tartar, that has really done a fine job taking care of their teeth and cleaning their teeth.

What is that from? That's often due to the body itself having things that are making it unable to keep itself well. This is gonna go all to my book. If you haven't checked it out, Living Well with Dr.

Michelle, I talk about what do cells need to stay well? And the same goes for your mouth and your gum cells. What do they need to stay well? Will they need certain supplies, support, signals, security?

They need some things. And all of those things are often what you're doing to keep your body well. So in your mouth specifically. I really recommend a mouthwash that's going to have an antimicrobial in it that's kind to your tissue, kind to your mouth.

I also have all sorts of herbals in my mouthwash that are going to support the health and the healing of the gums. So if your teeth are clean and you still have gum disease, you need to do some of these other things on the side.

You may need to add minerals, vitamins D and K. to be able to support the health and healing of your gums because like i said at the beginning gum disease doesn't just stay in your mouth this will go to your heart it will go to your brain and it will increase your risk of these very serious and chronic diseases so it's not something to mess around with go to your dentist come see us if you're local we would love to see you here at total care dental We do

a full gum exam to make sure that your gums are in good health so that you can be too.

We treat it with ozone with actual local cleaning of everything and we recommend supplements and things that you can do at home to stay well there as well.

So either find a dentist near you on my directory at livingwellwithdrmichelle.com or come and visit us here. Let's keep your mouth and your heart healthy.