

Diabetes: Dental Tips

**Have a dental checkup
at least every 6 months.**

Take good care of your teeth and gums. At least twice a day, brush your teeth with a soft bristle toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste. Use dental floss every day to clean between the teeth.

If your gums bleed while you are brushing your teeth or eating, or a bad taste stays in your mouth, go to the dentist. Tell your dentist about any other changes you see, such as white patches, in your mouth.

Smoking makes gum problems worse. Your doctor or dentist can help you quit.



**National Oral Health
Information Clearinghouse
1 NOHIC Way
Bethesda, MD 20892-3500**

**August 2002
Order OP-09**

Voice: (301) 402-7364 • TTY: (301) 656-7581

Internet: www.nohic.nidcr.nih.gov • E-mail: nohic@nidcr.nih.gov • Fax: (301) 907-8830

Diabetes: Dental Tips

Tell your dentist you have diabetes and ask him or her to show you how to keep your teeth and gums healthy.

People with diabetes get gum disease more often than people who do not have diabetes. Gum infections can make it hard to control blood sugar. Once a gum infection starts, it can take a long time to heal. If the infection is severe, teeth can loosen or even fall out. **Good blood sugar control can prevent gum problems.**

Keeping your own teeth is important for healthy eating. Natural teeth help you chew foods better and easier than you can with dentures. Because infections can make gums sore and uneven, dentures may not fit right. Be sure to tell your dentist if your dentures hurt.

