

The Dental Health Insider

Dental Health Services, offering you valuable health information from 35 years experience delivering dental benefit solutions....

New Year, New You. Let the String Lead the Way!

Healthy teeth, healthy heart. By the time we reach adulthood, most of us know that the consequences of not flossing are pretty tough on our teeth and gums. What if you knew that this simple daily ritual not only protects your mouth, but also may protect your heart and arteries? **Suddenly that little white string becomes more like a lifeline!**

A blow to your smile— When we don't floss regularly our teeth can really suffer. A soft sticky, bacterial film begins to accumulate on neglected teeth, especially below the gum line. Eventually the acids in these soft sticky plaques begin to destroy the outer enamel of the teeth. Gums may become irritated and bleed and breath may start to smell bad. Eventually dental diseases that lead to tooth loss can take hold.

Men under age 50 with advanced periodontal disease were found to be 2.6 times more likely to die prematurely and 3 times more likely to die of heart disease compared to men with health teeth and gums.

As if all this weren't reason enough to floss, now research suggests that regular flossing may have health impacts beyond your mouth. Here are three ways flossing can protect your health:

1. Flossing may protect your heart

In one emergency room study, patients who came to the ER with chest pain

were found to have a higher rate of recurring gum infections. Researchers are not sure what is behind the connection, but the worrisome data makes the **simple task of flossing a non-brainer for optimal health.**

2. Flossing may protect your arteries

Flossing and clogged arteries also may be related. Research has found that the same bacteria in tooth plaque also are found in the deadly fat deposits that obstruct arteries. Inflammation is a crucial link in the causal chain that leads to plaque arterial obstruction.

3. Flossing may reduce your risk of diabetes and its complications

If you already have certain health concerns, flossing may help protect you from any further complications. For example, periodontal disease appears to make insulin resistance worse. Flossing regularly can make your biological age as much as 6.4 times younger.

Let the String Lead the Way

Short of a visit to the dentist, no other single personal oral healthcare habit alone has the same ability to remove plaque between teeth and below your gum line. **Being aware of the connection between poor oral health and disease gives you one more opportunity to achieve premium wellness!**

Sources: Men's Health Journal, Journal of Periodontal Research, and ADA.

Get the most out of the little white string!

1. Be sure to slide the floss under your gum line and gently curl it around each tooth.
2. Floss gently, but don't quit because your gums bleed. They will become stronger and bleed less with regular flossing.
3. Use fresh floss for each tooth.



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800.637.6453

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Long Beach
3833 Atlantic Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90807
Tel 562.595.6000
Fax 562.424.0150

San Diego
2515 Camino del Rio S #242A
San Diego, CA 92108
Tel 619.294.4025
Fax 619.294.2098

Seattle
936 N 34th Street, Suite 208
Seattle, WA 98103
Tel 206.633.2300
Fax 206.624.8755

www.dentalhealthservices.com

