

Pre-Diabetes and Oral Health

Prediabetes is a serious, but often under-recognized health issue. According to the CDC, prediabetes is characterized by high blood sugar levels that are out of the normal range, but are not yet high enough to be considered type 2 diabetes.¹ Prediabetes affects more than 84 million people and about 9 out of 10 adults who have the condition, are undiagnosed¹. Having prediabetes can also be a warning sign to the onset of type 2 diabetes.²

Having too much sugar in the blood, over long periods of time, can cause inflammation that can affect many body systems, including your mouth. And the health of the mouth can also directly affect overall health: Undiagnosed and/or untreated gum disease can contribute to the development, or worsening, of prediabetes. In fact, a recent study suggests periodontitis (gum disease) can be an early warning sign of diabetes.³

To help reduce your risk of developing prediabetes, here are some quick tips:

- ❖ **Good oral care.** Brushing twice daily, flossing and rinsing can go a long way in caring for your oral *and* overall health.
- ❖ **Have regular dental check-ups and cleanings.** Going to the dentist regularly can help in finding dental and overall health issues early. Alert your dentist about any changes in your oral health such as bleeding and/or receding gums, dry mouth and/or excessive thirst.
- ❖ **Annual physician visits.** Make sure and see your physician each year and learn the risk factors for developing prediabetes. Your physician will recommend any next steps based on your examination and individual needs.
- ❖ **Exercise, eat right, and drink water.** Physical activity such as walking, regular consumption of whole foods such as vegetables, lean protein (chicken, fish and lean cuts of red meat), along with drinking plenty of water, can help in lowering your risk for both prediabetes and diabetes.

Visit United Concordia Dental's [Dental Health Center](#) for more information on Diabetes and Oral Health. To better understand how lifestyle choices, medications and diet can affect your oral health, take our [My Dental Assessment](#) and get your printable report card today! It's free and anyone can take it!

References:

¹[About Prediabetes and Type 2 Diabetes; Centers for Disease Control; March; 2018.](#)

²[Diabetes Alert Day; National Institute of Health; 2018.](#)

³[Periodontitis as a possible early sign of diabetes mellitus; BMJ Open Diabetes Research & Care; 2017.](#)

⁴[Preventing Type 2 Diabetes; National Institute of Diabetes, and Digestive and Kidney Diseases; 2016.](#)