

Heart disease and oral health

There is a link between gum disease and heart disease. Bacteria in the mouth can narrow blood vessels and increase the risk of heart attacks. Some medicines can also increase the risk of having gum disease.

Signs of gum disease

- Red, swollen or bleeding gums.
- Loose teeth.
- Gums that are loose and pull away from teeth.
- Bad breath.
- Sensitive or sore teeth.
- Loss of taste.

What can I do to prevent gum disease?

- Brush your teeth two times a day.
- Use a toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.
- Clean between your teeth using floss or an interdental toothbrush.
- If you wear dentures, clean them daily.
- Have regular dental check-ups.

What are my healthy choices?

- Eat regular meals.
- Eat the recommended serves of fruits and vegetables.
- Limit foods and drinks high in added sugars, saturated fats and salt.
- Choose water as your everyday drink.
- If you choose to drink alcohol, limit intake, and talk to your health care provider.
- Do not smoke -if you do, try, and quit. Call Quitline 137848 for support.
- Keep physically active.

Everyone's needs are different so please see your doctor/dietician for advice.

What do I need to discuss with my health care provider and dental practitioner?

- Tell them about any oral health problems.
- Inform them about any heart problems and any other health conditions.
- Inform them about any treatments or procedures your health care provider or dental practitioner has suggested.
- Tell them about any medications you are taking.

Speak to both your health care provider and dental practitioner for information about the effects of your medicines.

Dental services in NSW

Public dental services are free for adults with one of the following Australian Government concession cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Health Care Card
- Commonwealth Seniors Health Card

To make a dental appointment with a public dental service, call: 1800 679 336. They will ask for your Medicare card details. If you are an adult, you will also need your concession card details.

To find a private dentist go to Australian Dental Association -Find a Dentist

<https://www.adansw.com.au/Community/FindaDentist>