

[IMAGE]

Open Up to Full-Body Health

By Editorial Staff

People fear the dentist more than any other medical professional. There's something about the sharp tools and high-pitched hum of the drill that makes us dread those biannual visits. But recent reports suggest your dentist can offer you far more than a great smile. Those teeth cleanings also may help prevent diabetes, stroke, low birth weight in babies and heart disease.

A smiling child brandishing a toothbrush. - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark A recent study in *The New England Journal of Medicine* estimated that as many as 80 percent of American adults have some form of periodontal (gum) disease. Researchers found that, like obesity, inflammatory periodontal diseases may increase insulin, which is a major issue for diabetics. Proper dental care can combat complications of diabetes and may reduce inflammation throughout the body associated with various health problems.

Here's the science: If people fail to brush their teeth or floss, bacteria build up between the teeth, migrate into the bloodstream and clog arteries. By improving the expansion of the blood vessels and allowing better blood flow, treating gum disease may diminish the risk of heart attack and cardiovascular disease.

You already know going to the dentist is essential for healthy teeth and gums. Now that good dental health also means full-body health, you have two good reasons to overcome your fears and schedule regular checkups with your dentist.

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