



American Heart Association®

Healthy Smiles, Healthy Hearts™

# Oral+Heart **CONNECTION**



## **Understanding the Basics**

*How are my mouth and my heart connected?*

Your mouth and heart are physically connected through your bloodstream. Blood vessels carry oxygen and nutrients between your heart and the tissues in your mouth. They can also carry bacteria and inflammation from infected gums to other parts of the body.



Delta Dental is proud to collaborate with the American Heart Association's Healthy Smiles, Healthy Hearts initiative.

Delta Dental is a registered trademark of Delta Dental Plans Association

## ***Can gum disease increase my risk for heart problems?***

- People with gum disease are more likely to have heart disease.
- Gum disease does not directly cause heart disease, but inflammation from gum disease can be associated with inflammation in other parts of the body.
- Keeping your gums healthy can help reduce your overall risk.

## ***What are the signs of gum disease?***

You may have gum disease if you notice:

- Bleeding when brushing or flossing
- Red, swollen or tender gums
- Bad breath that doesn't go away
- Loose teeth

If you see these signs, talk with your dental team.

## ***What is inflammation?***

Inflammation is a way your body fights germs. Sometimes inflammation lasts too long. If this happens, it can harm blood vessels and raise the risk of heart problems.

**Oral health is connected to heart health — what happens in your mouth can affect your heart.**

Learn more at [heart.org/OralHealth](https://heart.org/OralHealth)

