

# Diabetes Mellitus

**Diabetes mellitus, commonly referred to as diabetes, is a group of metabolic disorders in which there are high blood sugar levels over a prolonged period. This is caused by defects in insulin secretion, insulin action or both.**

This chronic condition is associated with damage, dysfunction and failure of various organs such as the eyes, kidneys, nerves, heart and blood vessels. People with diabetes have a higher risk of oral infections, and in turn, oral infections can worsen diabetes. There is a greater chance and risk of periodontitis (gum disease) in people with diabetes.<sup>1</sup>

Controlling chronic gum disease can alter the blood sugar and help decrease the need for medications.

**Regular dental visits can help prevent or treat gum disease, which can affect the need for medication and help control blood sugar levels.**



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Delta Dental of Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, and Tennessee

<sup>1</sup> American Diabetes Association, "Diabetes and Oral Health Problems," web.