



## Heart Disease and Oral Health

Maintaining good oral hygiene may benefit the health of your heart, not just your mouth. Several studies reveal a link between periodontal (gum) disease and an increased risk of heart disease.

### Gum disease: what to look for

Gum disease is often painless and may not have any noticeable symptoms. However, there are several signs that may indicate gum disease. Visit your dentist if you have any of these symptoms:

- Bleeding gums
- Gums that are red, swollen or tender
- Receding gums
- Constant bad breath or bad tastes in the mouth
- Loose or separating permanent teeth
- Changes in your bite
- Changes to the fit of dentures

Visit [truassure.com](http://truassure.com) for more oral health resources and information.

<sup>1</sup>*New England Journal of Medicine:* <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/short/356/9/911>

<sup>2</sup>*The American Heart Association:* <http://www.americanheart.org>

### What the research says

Recent studies show a relationship between the early onset of gum disease and plaque build up inside arteries that can lead to coronary artery disease. According to the American Heart Association, coronary artery disease affects nearly 13 million Americans and is responsible for about 370,000 deaths every year.<sup>1</sup> According to a study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*,<sup>2</sup> gum disease can also contribute to blood vessel dysfunction, which may be improved with dental treatments such as scaling and root planing, local antibiotics and tooth extractions.

Good oral health habits like brushing, flossing, and visiting the dentist regularly are crucial for your oral health and overall health. Because heart disease remains the leading cause of death for Americans, it's important to brush up for the health of your heart!