



Dental Horizons

Guiding Generations to Healthy Smiles

Surprisingly, a recent national survey concluded that many people experience MORE anxiety over "choosing" a dentist than they experience "going" to a dentist. Experience peace of mind knowing that, by choosing Dental Horizons, you've chosen a practice that actually thinks these concerns through from YOUR perspective. It's another reason why you don't need to worry about choosing the wrong dentist. You're about ready to choose the right one.

It always helps to educate yourself about your health options. We trust this document will aid your decision and give you that lifetime resource you deserve.

When it comes to dental advice, keep one very important point in mind. Our promise to you is that we never over prescribe treatment. We view each patient relationship as a solemn trust, providing the information YOU need to make your own knowledgeable decisions. And when appropriate, Dental Horizons practices provide the expertise and experience to help you achieve your dental-related objectives.

Your smile is one of the very first things that people notice about you. An engaging smile can boost self confidence, enhance one's career, and affect one's relationships. Many baby boomer patients report that their new youthful smile has become their "fountain of youth", putting spring back into their step.

We believe that when it comes to the appearance of your teeth, the most important thing is that **you feel confident about your smile**—and Dental Horizons is both well trained and experienced to help.

The link between oral health and overall health.

Modern scientific evidence continues to connect the dots between your oral health and your overall health. You'll be surprised as you learn more about these important links.

The eyes may be a window to the soul, but your mouth is a window to your body's complete health.

Did you know...

...that your oral health can be connected to many other health conditions in your body? Sometimes the first sign of a disease shows up in your mouth. In other cases, infections in your mouth, such as gum disease, can cause problems in other areas of your body by allowing bacteria to enter your bloodstream and wreak havoc elsewhere in your body. Yes, your mouth is teeming with bacteria. Usually we keep these bacteria under control with good oral health care, such as daily brushing and flossing. However, gum disease may provide bacteria a port of entry into your bloodstream. And medications or treatments that reduce saliva flow or disrupt the normal balance of bacteria in your mouth may also lead to oral changes, making it easier to develop harmful conditions.

Here's a look at other conditions that appear to be increasingly linked to your oral health:

✔ Cardiovascular disease

Research shows that several types of cardiovascular disease may be linked to oral health. These include heart disease, clogged arteries, stroke and bacterial endocarditis. Some researchers believe that bacteria from gum disease may travel through your arteries to your heart, affecting your cardiovascular system. Although periodontal disease seems to be associated with heart disease, more studies are needed before the link can be confirmed with certainty.

✔ Premature birth

Gum disease has shown to be associated with premature births. Some research has shown that disease-causing organisms in a pregnant woman's mouth can wind up in the placenta or amniotic fluid, possibly to cause premature birth. Unfortunately, treating periodontal disease during pregnancy may be too late, because the infection may have already spread in the woman's body. This is why it's vital to maintain excellent oral health before you get pregnant.

✔ Diabetes

Diabetes increases your risk of gum disease, cavities, tooth loss, dry mouth, and a variety of oral infections. Conversely, poor oral health can make your diabetes more difficult to control. Infections may cause your blood sugar to rise and require more insulin to keep it under control.

✔ HIV/AIDS

In some cases, one of the first signs of AIDS may appear in your mouth, with severe gum infection. You may also develop persistent white spots or unusual lesions on your tongue or in your mouth.

Many other conditions may make their presence known in your mouth before you know anything is wrong. These may include Sjogren's syndrome, certain cancers, eating disorders, syphilis, gonorrhea and substance abuse. You're making an investment in your overall health, not just for now, but for the future, too.

* Portions of this information, courtesy of the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER).