

Periodontal Health for Men



From the American Academy of Periodontology



Research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found that periodontal disease is significantly more prevalent in men (nearly 60 percent of U.S. adults over 30) than in women (nearly 40 percent of U.S. adults over 30). This may be because men, who are less likely to see the dentist regularly, also have worse indicators of periodontal health than women, including higher incidence of dental plaque, tartar, and bleeding during a dental exam.

With their increased likelihood of periodontal disease development, men are advised to prioritize their periodontal health as it may have an impact on a variety of other health factors.

Prostate-Specific Antigen

There is evidence of a possible link between prostate health and periodontal health. Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) is a protein created in the prostate and is normally secreted in very small amounts. When the prostate becomes inflamed, infected, or affected by cancer, PSA levels rise. Research has demonstrated that men with indicators of periodontal disease (such as red, swollen, or tender gums) and prostatitis (inflammation of the prostate) have higher levels of PSA than men with only one of these conditions.

Cardiovascular Disease

Research finds that periodontal disease and cardiovascular disease may share an association, as having periodontal disease may increase your risk of cardiovascular disease. Both diseases are chronic inflammatory conditions, and researchers believe that inflammation is the shared culprit. Because men have a higher cardiovascular disease risk than women, maintaining periodontal health may be a factor in also maintaining cardiovascular health.

Impotence

Men with periodontal disease may be more likely to experience erectile dysfunction. One study found that prolonged chronic inflammation (the same type of inflammation that is associated with periodontal disease) can affect the lining of the blood vessels throughout the body, which can lead to impotence.

Cancer

Men with a history of periodontal disease are 14 percent more likely to develop cancer than men with healthy gums. Specifically, men with periodontal disease may be 49 percent more likely than women to develop kidney cancer, 54 percent more likely to develop pancreatic cancer, and 30 percent more likely to develop blood cancers.

Another Step: The Comprehensive Periodontal Evaluation (CPE)

With periodontal disease affecting nearly 64.7 million people in the United States (that's about one in every two adults over the age of 30), the health of your gums should be regularly monitored to minimize your risk.

Many patients don't see a dental professional until after they've noticed pain, bleeding gums, or loosening teeth— all signs that periodontal disease is in its advanced stages. An annual CPE can detect periodontal disease before it becomes severe, and is the first step to creating a suitable treatment and/or maintenance plan for your individual situation.