



# From mouth to heart: The dental connection

Learn the effects oral health has on your heart.

February is American Heart Health Awareness Month. At Cigna Healthcare®, we're committed to helping you protect your heart - and your smile.



## Discover the link

Did you know that visiting your dentist for regular cleanings and screenings is great for your heart health?<sup>1</sup> Specific types of bacteria in the mouth can travel through the bloodstream and spread to your heart, which may lead to heart conditions, including high blood pressure and coronary artery disease.<sup>1</sup>

## Identify the problems

Research shows people with gingivitis (gum disease) are much more likely to suffer from heart disease, due to increased inflammation.<sup>2</sup> Also, long-lasting oral infections can continuously release bacteria into the bloodstream, creating stress on the heart and blood vessels.<sup>1</sup> The following oral health conditions have been closely associated with heart health concerns.<sup>3</sup>

- **Gingivitis:** redness, swelling, and bleeding of the gums
- **Periodontitis:** a more severe, chronic form of gingivitis
- **Tooth abscesses:** pus-filled pockets caused by bacterial infection

## Stay protected with simple habits

Here are some tips to protect your mouth and your heart.<sup>3</sup>

- Brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste
- Floss between teeth once a day
- Use mouthwash to help kill harmful bacteria
- Eat a balanced diet rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, and omega-3s
- Avoid excess sugar and processed foods to help reduce plaque
- Avoid smoking
- Schedule regular dental checkups every six months



Stay on track and schedule  
your dental check-up today.

To find in-network care, visit [myCigna.com](https://mycigna.com)

1. American Heart Association. "Oral Health. Your oral health may affect your heart health." 2025. <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/oral-health>. Last accessed December 4, 2025.

2. Kerrigan, Steven. Science Alert. "Poor Oral Hygiene Could Be Taking a Toll on Your Heart, Experts Say". May 5, 2025. <https://www.sciencealert.com/poor-oral-hygiene-could-be-taking-a-toll-on-your-heart-expert-says>

3. Maverick. Collected Med. "Can Poor Oral Health Lead to Heart Disease? What the Science Says". July 21, 2025. <https://collectedmed.com/health-issues/oral-health/poor-oral-health-and-heart-disease/>