

# LIVING with DM

## Oral hygiene in people with diabetes

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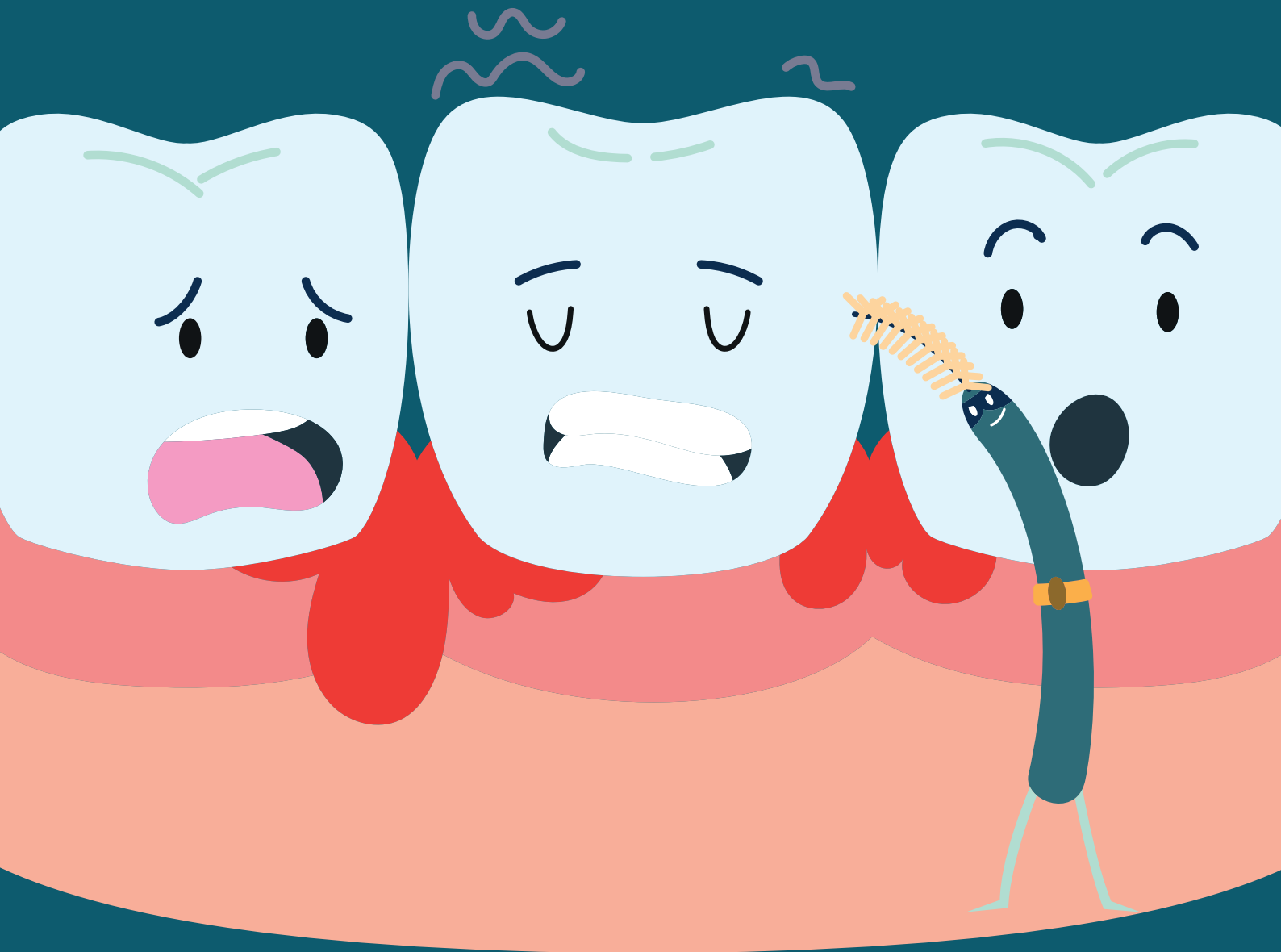
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## Diabetes and periodontal diseases

If you have diabetes, especially if it is not controlled well, you are **up to 3 times more likely** to suffer from gum disease (**gingivitis and periodontitis**) because your ability to fight bacteria in your mouth is impaired.

Periodontal diseases are considered to be the **sixth complication** of diabetes.

Gingivitis is the mildest disease and is characterised by bleeding and inflammation of the gums. If treated, it is reversible. If left untreated, it can develop into periodontitis, which is characterised by **progressive destruction** of the gum and bone supporting the teeth, which can lead to tooth loss.

# What can you do to improve the situation?

- ★ Brush your teeth with a manual or electric toothbrush after every meal or, **at least twice a day for at least 2 minutes**. Use fluoride toothpaste.
- ★ **The daily use of floss** (if your spaces are small) or **interdental brushes** (when they are larger) is **essential** to keep your gums healthy.
- ★ Change your toothbrush at least once every 3 months.
- ★ Don't forget to brush your tongue, a major reservoir for bacteria.
- ★ **Watch for warning signs in your mouth:** bleeding when brushing or spontaneous bleeding, a bad taste in your mouth, receding gums, gaps between your teeth, "loose" teeth, pus in your gums, etc. In such cases, visit your dentist and **always remind them that you have diabetes**.
- ★ If you have just been diagnosed with diabetes, see your dentist or periodontist so they can check your teeth and gums. **Prevention is the best strategy**.
- ★ If you are diagnosed with gingivitis or periodontitis, you should have the proper treatment, consisting of professional "cleaning" and scraping of plaque and dental "tartar" from the teeth, both above and below the gum (periodontal pocket).

★ Visit your dentist for gum maintenance, **at least every 6 months**.

★ If you smoke, **stop smoking**, because tobacco, in addition its negative impact on the control of your diabetes, masks many symptoms of periodontitis, reduces the response to treatment and worsens the progression of the disease.



## Remember...

- ★ Periodontal disease also has a negative impact on your diabetes.
- ★ If you have periodontitis, you have an increased risk of your diabetes getting out of control and other associated complications.
- ★ **Good brushing and therefore good gum health effectively contribute to keeping your diabetes under control.**