

The Oral-Systemic Connection Across the Lifespan



Pregnancy/Postpartum

Periodontal treatment during pregnancy is linked to lower risk of perinatal mortality, preterm birth, and low birth weight.¹



Childhood

- Early childhood caries (ECC) and its associated pain are linked to negative impacts on play, school, sleeping, eating, and overall well-being.^{2,3}
- Children with ECC face significant risk of infection as well as risks associated with the use of general anesthesia to treat ECC.²



Adolescence

- E-cigarette use ("vaping"), the most common form of nicotine used by adolescents, is linked to increased risk of gum disease and oral lesions.^{4,5,6}
- Adolescents are more likely to have oral injuries through school sports, as well as chipped teeth from oral piercings and dental decay due to increased sugar intake, as they become more independent from their parents.⁷



Young Adulthood

Adolescents and young adults are at **greater risk for eating disorders**, which are linked to increased dental erosion and oral lesions.⁸

Use of tobacco and alcohol, often beginning in young adulthood, increases the risk of developing oral cancer.9



Middle Age

Periodontal disease, which becomes more common in middle and older age, has bidirectional relationships with systemic conditions such as diabetes, kidney disease, and cardiovascular disease.¹⁰⁻¹³



Older Adulthood

- Poor oral health, including periodontal disease, is linked with increased risk of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia as well as hospitalacquired pneumonia.^{14, 15}
- Older adults with fewer than 20 teeth are more likely to experience greater overall disability and cognitive decline.16

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