

Oral health plays a vital role in Canadians' overall health

We are never too old to have healthy teeth and gums. In fact, an increasing number of studies show a link between oral health and overall health. According to the Canadian Dental Association (CDA), there may actually be a link between oral disease and other health problems, such as diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

"More and more research is being done regarding the connection between good oral health and general health," says CDA President, Dr. Jack Cottrell. "Studies show gum disease is being linked to the likelihood of developing diabetes."

While the reasons for the link between oral health and general health are not yet known, a recent study in the Journal of the Canadian Dental Association shows gum disease may be more prevalent among diabetic patients than non-diabetic people, and may actually contribute to the likelihood of developing the disease.

Since the risk for diabetes is higher as we grow older, it is important for seniors and their caregivers to know about the significance of a healthy mouth for a healthy body. As part of a healthier lifestyle in the golden years, seniors should see their dentist regularly to maintain their teeth, gums, dental implants and dentures, and to avoid seri-



ous dental problems.

In addition to regular checkups, here are a few specific oral health care tips from the CDA to help keep your mouth healthy, no matter what your age:

- Practice good oral hygiene. Brush your teeth at least twice a day and floss once a day to remove plaque and bacteria that can cause cavities and gum disease.

Dentures or dental implants need to be properly cleaned everyday. If you find it hard to hold your toothbrush, make the handle bigger by wrapping it with layers of aluminum foil. To make flossing easier, try using a plastic floss holder or use dental tape. Your dentist may have other suggestions as well.

- Eat a well-balanced diet and avoid sugar. Healthy food is good for your general and oral health. Nutrients from healthy food help fight cavities and gum disease.

- Check your gums regularly. Look for warning signs of gum disease such as red, shiny, puffy, sore or sensitive gums and report them to your dentist.

- Don't smoke. Smoking is a major cause of tooth loss through gum disease and may cause oral cancer.

For more information on oral health for seniors, visit your dentist and the CDA website at www.cda-adc.ca.

—News Canada

Georgetown DENTURE CLINIC

RELINING DENTURES QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: What is a permanent processed reline?

A: A processed reline is a way of re-basing your denture with the same type of long cure from which it was originally made. This will make the denture fit more snugly to your ridge.

Q: Will it change the appearance of my teeth?

A: No, it only re-fits the denture to your ridge, no change of tooth position takes place.

Q: What are soft, or cushion relines?

A: A permanent soft rubber lining is applied to the lower denture inside ridge. Soft, or cushion relines are an excellent alternative for those who have sensitive oral tissue and tend to get frequent sore spots. A properly applied soft lining can provide years of comfortable chewing and smiling!

Q: How long will it take?

A: Most relines commenced in the morning are completed and returned to the patient that afternoon.

Q: What if I'm a working person and can't give up my teeth for a day?

A: The alternative is to bring your dentures in after work. It can be relined and returned to you the next morning by 8:00 a.m., or come in after work one day, and pick them up after work the following day. Relining an existing denture is an economical way to prolong the life of your plate by restoring and maintaining a firm comfortable fit.

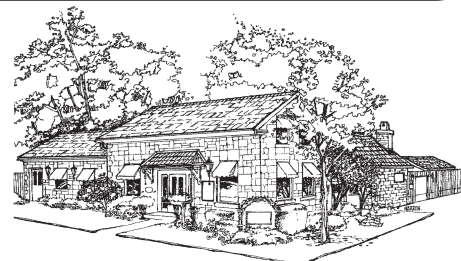
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