



**Bite**

# Word of mouth

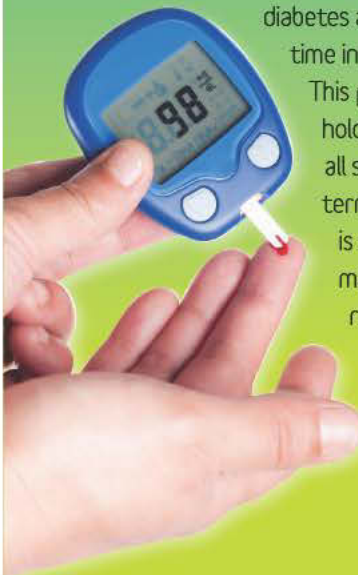
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**Featured**

## What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is when the body fails to produce adequate amounts of the hormone insulin. Since insulin is necessary for the absorption of glucose (sugar) into muscle, this leaves abnormally high concentrations of sugar in the blood. Careful balance of blood sugar is necessary to prevent the symptoms and complications of diabetes which can be quite serious. These include obesity, heart disease, kidney disease, vision and eye problems, painful sores in the feet and legs, and skin and mouth infections.

Studies have shown that the prevalence of diabetes in Australia is increasing, with one study finding a doubling since 1981. According to a National Health Survey (2007-2008), about 4% of Australians have been diagnosed with diabetes at some time in their lives. This proportion holds true for all states and territories, and is similar for major cities, regional areas, and remote areas.



The prevalence of diabetes increases with age; and men are more likely to be affected.

This has led the authors of the Australian Diabetes, Obesity, and Lifestyle Study to conclude that 'Australia has a rapidly rising prevalence of diabetes and other categories of abnormal glucose tolerance. The prevalence of abnormal glucose tolerance in Australia is one of the highest yet reported from a developed nation'.

So where does gum disease fit in?

This is a true chicken-and-egg question. More and more, evidence shows that people with periodontal disease (that's the fancy name for 'gum disease') are more likely to be diabetics than people with healthy gums. But researchers still aren't sure which comes first - does having diseased gums increase the chance of diabetes, or does having diabetes increase the risk of gum disease? >

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### This month...

*Later this month I am presenting for the Diabetes Australia Conference at the Brisbane Convention Centre so I thought it would be topical to discuss diabetes and how it affects your teeth and gums. Known as the sixth major complication of diabetes, gum disease is the leading cause of tooth loss in adults and arguably one of the most overlooked complications of diabetes.*

*We've also thrown in a few tips on how to keep dentures clean using some simple things from around the home.*

*Dr Simon Franks*



> continued

What we know so far indicates that it may be a feedback loop that works both ways!

In a long-term study conducted at Columbia University in the United States, researchers followed 9,000 people who did not have diabetes. Over the 20-year study period, those individuals who had gum disease were more than twice as likely to develop diabetes as those who did not—even after adjusting for age, smoking, diet, and so on. An interesting twist, however, was that those subjects whose gum disease progressed to the point where they lost all of their teeth appeared to be at a lower risk for diabetes!

While we don't recommend losing one's teeth in an attempt to prevent diabetes, it appears that eliminating the toothy source of infection improved long-

term risk. Extending this idea, it seems that good oral hygiene and dental care to prevent infections and gum disease will also lower the risk of contracting diabetes.

What it means for you

In practical terms, it really doesn't matter whether the chicken came first, or the egg. If you have gum disease, you need to follow a treatment plan that will correct this. If you are a diabetic, you need to take very good care of your health. Good control of your blood sugar will make preventing and correcting gum disease and other complications that much easier.

At Bite Dental, we always schedule time to do a full gum measurement and check at every exam appointment—whether you're diabetic or not. So you can rest assured that your teeth and gums are in the best hands.



**Handy hint**

**Cleaning falsies**

“ Even false teeth need to be cleaned!! Dentures are susceptible to stains from tea, coffee and food. Many denture wearers use a commercial product to soak their teeth; however there are many homemade remedies that will clean them just as well. Household items such as bleach, vinegar and baking soda are powerful cleaners and disinfectants that will remove most stains and food particles, returning the denture to its original state.

The following are a guide for your homemade solutions and work best as an overnight soak:

- Bleach & Water  
1 tablespoon bleach to 10 tablespoons water
- White Vinegar & Water  
1 cup vinegar to 1 cup water
- Baking Soda & Water  
1 teaspoon baking soda to 1 cup water ”



**Bite news**

**Diabetes Australia Conference**



Simon is presenting this month at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre as part of the Diabetes Australia Conference for diabetics, their families, and health care professionals.



Congratulations goes to David T on winning the Easter hamper. Enjoy the chocolates and we look forward to your next check up!!!

Celebrate everyday heros. Let us know if you have a cause you'd like us to shout about.

Visit the Bite Dental website to receive our email newsletter which includes regular health tips plus exclusive savings and offers from Bite Dental and our community.

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