Does a healthy MOUTH equal a healthy HEART?

The research says "yes."

Doctors have been talking about the link for nearly two decades and with good reason. Heart disease is a serious problem around the world. So is poor oral health. Could better brushing and flossing give you a healthier heart? And could dentists peek inside your mouth and see if you're at risk for heart disease?

So, what's the link? In a word it's **inflammation**, or **swelling**. Scientists know that it leads to hardened arteries, also called atherosclerosis. That's a condition that makes it hard for blood to flow to your heart. It puts you at greater risk for heart attack and stroke.

Inflammation is also a sure sign of gum disease. Periodontitis, which leads to infected pockets of germy pus. That's the type that raises the worry for heart problems. It allows bacteria and other toxins to spread below the gum line. Your gums are full of blood vessels. And, your mouth is full of bacteria. If you disrupt the gum layer even a little bit, you're going to get bacteria in your bloodstream. Bacteria can go anywhere and trigger inflammation throughout the body, which can cause **damage to blood vessels**, including those of the heart.

Studies show that the **bacteria found in periodontal disease** - including Streptococcus sanguis, which plays a role in strokes- **spreads to the heart**.

Dr. Ilona Fotek

Take care of your gums. You might be saving your heart!

Dental Healing Arts