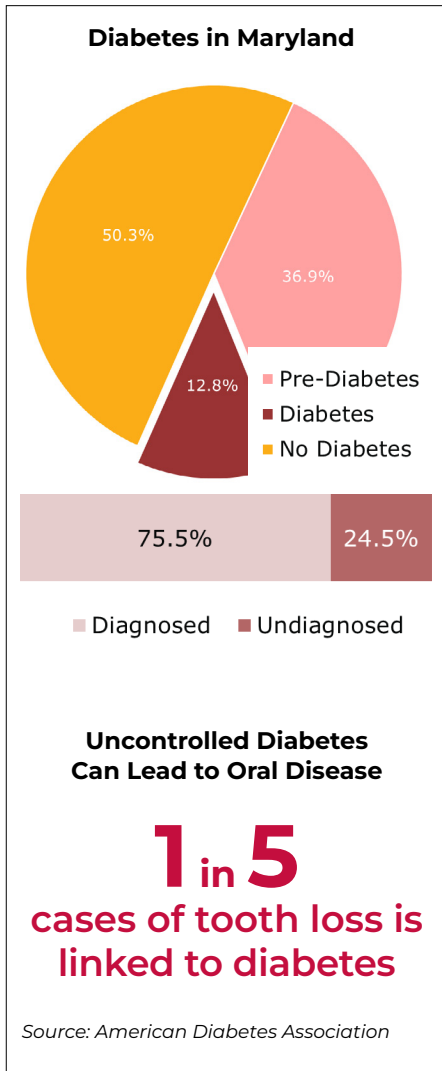


# Diabetes and Oral Health

The importance of maintaining a healthy mouth

Keep your dentist informed about your diabetes and your physician informed about your oral health.



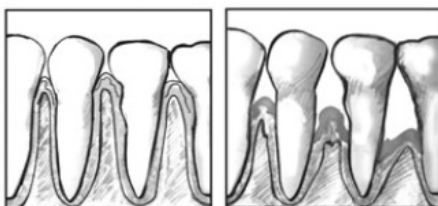
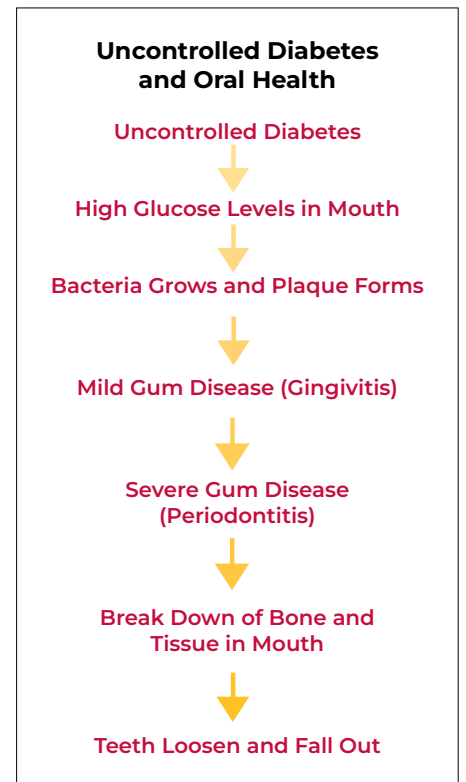
## Gum (Periodontal) Disease: What do I need to know?

The health of your mouth may affect your body's ability to maintain healthy blood sugar levels. People with diabetes have a greater risk of developing gum disease. Gum disease can be more severe and take longer to heal if you have diabetes. Having gum disease can make your blood glucose hard to control.



**Glucose:** Glucose (sugar) is present in your saliva. When diabetes is not controlled, high glucose levels in your saliva help harmful bacteria grow. These bacteria combine with food to form a soft, sticky film called plaque. Plaque causes cavities, gum (periodontal) disease, and bad breath.

**Gingivitis:** Gingivitis is a mild form of gum disease caused by plaque buildup. Gums appear red and swollen, are painful and bleed easily when brushed. Gingivitis can be reversed with dental cleaning and proper home oral hygiene. Plaque that is not removed by regular brushing and flossing hardens over time into calculus (tartar) and collects above your gum line. Calculus makes it harder to brush and clean between teeth.



Healthy Gums

Gum Disease

If not treated, gingivitis can advance to **periodontitis**. The gums pull away from the teeth and slowly become infected. This infection can last a long time. Your body's response to this infection starts to break down the bone and the tissue that holds the teeth in place. If left untreated, the teeth will loosen and fall out. This infection can cause blood sugar to rise.