Dr. G. Philip Spencer on the Mouth-Body Connection  
  
Oral hygiene and periodontal health are inseparably linked to overall health. In fact, a lot of research shows that there are connections between periodontal disease and several serious chronic health ailments. People that suffer from gum disease have a 40% higher chance of having another chronic health condition, and inadequate periodontal health can exacerbate the symptoms of heart disease and diabetes.  
  
Patients who have periodontal disease are almost twice as likely to develop heart disease, as periodontal disease leads to the creation of periodontal bacteria, which can enter the bloodstream and lead to clots and other issues that can instigate heart problems. [Periodontal bacteria](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Periodontitis) can also create more of the protein that inflames arteries, which increases a patient's risk of strokes and heart attacks.   
  
People with diabetes are more likely to develop periodontal disease than people without diabetes because diabetes lowers the body's overall protection against infection. Inflammation in the mouth also impacts the body's natural ability to control insulin. Therefore, anyone with diabetes needs to take extra care to ensure proper oral hygiene.   
  
So, if you are interested in maintaining your overall health, you need to make sure you take care of your teeth and gums!   
  
About the Author: Dr. G. Philip Spencer, DDS, is a Doctor of Dental Surgery with his own practice in Austin, Texas. To learn more about how you can bolster your oral hygiene, visit his website at: <http://www.spencerperio.com>.