95% of Indians have poor oral health
Periodontal or gum disease often goes undiagnosed. Oral and systemic health are closely related and hence, oral hygiene is crucial.

New Delhi, Feb 19, 2017: Abnormalities in the oral cavity may affect systemic health, and systemic conditions may affect oral health.

Oral cavity is a reservoir of agents capable of causing specific odontogenic infections. Systemic conditions that predispose to periodontal disease include diabetes mellitus, disorders of the hematopoietic system, disorders that impair neutrophil function, and antineoplastic therapy. The main complication of periodontal disease is tooth loss.

Padma Shri Awardee Dr K K Aggarwal, National President Indian Medical Association (IMA) and President Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) and Dr RN Tandon – Honorary Secretary General IMA in a joint statement said that “Oral health and heart disease are connected by the spread of bacteria from to other parts of your body through the blood stream. Bone loss and local and systemic spread of infection can occur, leading to periodontal abscess and orofacial “space” infections, particularly in immune-compromised patients.”

Oral microbial agents can also cause infective endocarditis. Cardiac conditions associated with the highest risk of endocarditis for which prophylaxis with dental procedures is recommended include prosthetic cardiac valve, previous infective endocarditis, cardiac transplantation, congenital heart disease, unrepaired CHD, completely repaired congenital heart defect with prosthetic material or device, whether placed at surgery or by catheter intervention and repaired CHD with residual defects at the site or adjacent to the site of a prosthetic patch or prosthetic device.

“Children with these conditions should receive antibiotic prophylaxis before dental treatment. Patients with chronic gum conditions such as gingivitis or advanced periodontal disease have the highest risk for heart disease caused by poor oral health, particularly if it remains undiagnosed and unmanaged. The bacteria that are associated with gum infection are in the mouth and can enter the blood stream, where they attach to the blood vessels and increase your risk to cardiovascular disease. Even if you don't have noticeable gum inflammation, however, inadequate oral hygiene and accumulated plaque puts you at risk for gum disease”, added Dr K K Aggarwal.
Following are some warning signs of deteriorating oral health:

- Gums appear red, swollen and sore to the touch.
- Bleeding gums while eating, brushing or flossing.
- Pus or other signs of infection around the gums and teeth.
- Gums appear to be "pulling away" from the teeth.
- Frequent bad breath or a bad taste in your mouth.
- Teeth feel loose and it seems as if they are more gapped than usual.

Source:
- [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4820580/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4820580/)

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**About IMA:** Indian Medical Association is the only representative, national voluntary organization of Doctors of Modern Scientific System of Medicine, which looks after the interest of doctors as well as the well being of the community at large. It has its Headquarter in Delhi and State / Terr. Branches in 30 States and Union Territories. It has over 2, 60,000 doctors as its members through more than 1765 active local branches spread across the country.

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