

Health Bites

DENTISTS TREAT MORE THAN TEETH.

Could unhealthy gums indicate trouble in other areas of my body?

Absolutely! If gums are inflamed, discoloured, or bleeding when brushing or flossing the possibility of gum disease should be considered. The bacteria causing this chronic inflammation can be detected by your dentist and may be your first clue in identifying potential heart disease as well as arthritis. The same bacteria that cause gum disease are also found inside the lining of inflamed arteries in patients with heart disease. Evidence also suggests that this pesky bacterium makes the body more prone to developing diabetes, obesity, low-birth-weight babies, and pancreatic cancer, not to mention an increased incidence of osteoporosis and pneumonia! The link between poor oral health and overall disease in the body is just as relevant as smoking was to cancer decades ago. It is important to see a dentist and qualified hygienist on a regular basis to monitor your oral wellness and assist you in maintaining optimal systemic health for your entire body.

My child struggles with paying attention and often acts out. Other than medication, do I have other options?

Many attention deficit and behavioural disruption difficulties are a direct result of sleep deprivation. Snoring, often combined with sleep apnea (gasping

for breath or stopping breathing for a few seconds), are common causes of inadequate sleep in both children and adults. Snoring can cause decreased oxygen intake during the night, resulting in tired, irritable personality characteristics. A thorough assessment by a dentist trained in airways analysis can help determine if tonsils, adenoids, or an overbite (set-back lower jaw) may be contributing to the behaviour problems. It is estimated that over fifty per cent of the children taking ADHD medications could be treated by alternative means with no medication required. Dark circles, puffy eyes, restlessness, bedwetting, and nightmares are other common symptoms of sleep apnea, which can be diagnosed and successfully treated by trained dentists.

Is it true that chronic head and neck pain could be related to my bite?

One of the most common causes of headaches in both children and adults is poor alignment of the teeth. Muscles in the head and neck must accommodate for a bad bite, which causes chronic muscular tension in the face and neck leading to severe headaches. Examination by a dentist with special training in bite position, airways, and the relationship to head and neck pain might be the first step toward pain-free days!

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Sierra Centre for Dental Wellness

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