

# CardioHealth

## Periodontal disease and heart disease

Some studies show that people with periodontal disease have a higher probability of being diagnosed with heart disease than those without periodontal disease.

Researchers suspect that is because inflammation is a characteristic of both periodontal and heart disease.

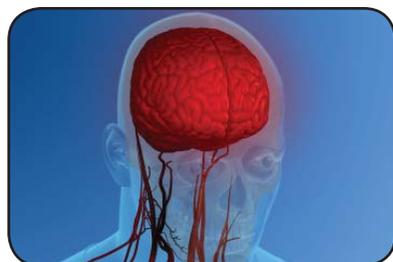
Bleeding gums, a sign of periodontal disease, are open wounds that allow the bacteria to enter your bloodstream.



*Bacteria travels to heart*



*Plaque breaks off in carotid artery*



*Plaque clot causes a stroke*



*Oral bacteria and heart connection*

## Plaque restricts blood flow

One cause of heart disease is a build-up of plaque in the arteries that, over time, can restrict the flow of blood. Periodontal bacteria have been found in that plaque, which leads many researchers to believe there might be a relationship.

In addition to building up, the plaque in the arteries can rupture, forming a clot. The clot can block blood flow and trigger a heart attack.

The same thing can happen in your brain. If the bacteria settle in your carotid artery, the inflammation may lead to the build-up of fatty deposits. If these deposits break apart and are carried in your bloodstream, they can lodge in your brain, block a blood vessel, and cause a stroke.

## Risk factors

You may also be at risk if you have damage to your heart or heart valve, certain congenital defects, a history of endocarditis, an artificial heart or heart valve, or you have had a heart transplant.

We want to work with you and your physician to keep you in optimal health. And a healthy mouth is key to a healthy life.