

## *Mouth Care and Diabetes*

This month we would like to discuss a health issue that is increasingly becoming more common and more widely diagnosed in our country...Diabetes.

When you have diabetes, you are at a greater risk for periodontal disease (infection of the gums and tissues supporting the teeth). This means any periodontal disease you may develop can be more severe and more difficult to control. Preventing and controlling periodontal disease requires ongoing care.

Bacteria in your mouth form a sticky, white film, called **plaque**, on teeth. If this plaque is not removed daily, it can harden into a rough, yellow or brown deposit called **tartar**. Tartar is more difficult to remove from your teeth. Bacteria from plaque and tartar can cause swollen, infected, and receding gums. This can lead to more severe gum and bone disease.

You can do some simple things that can help prevent this from happening. Be diligent with brushing your teeth after each meal and floss daily. Don't forget to brush your tongue! Dr. Rinehart may want to see you every 3 to 4 months for exams and cleanings. Frequency of your hygiene appointments will depend on your tartar and plaque build-up, on how severe your periodontal condition is, and how well you are caring for your gums and teeth.

Keeping your blood sugar at a healthy level will help control your diabetes. This will also help your body fight infections and may lessen any periodontal conditions. Follow the diet and exercise regime prescribed by your doctor and take your diabetes medications as directed.

Hope this month's letter finds everyone enjoying the first part of summer!

***Dr. Rinehart and Staff***