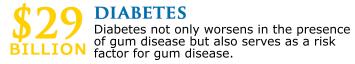
There is a proven link between oral health and overall health.

When neglected, oral infections can spread to the rest of the body.

When coinciding with systemic diseases, gum disease worsens illness.

As individuals receive regular dental care, their medical health improves—releasing vast savings back to the American health care system, government and businesses.



If 60% of people with diabetes better managed their oral health, savings could equal close to \$29 billion per year.

PREGNANCY Poor oral health can complicate pregnancy, contributing to gestational diabetes, BILLION preeclampsia and preterm birth.

If 40% of pregnant women received the benefits of oral care, thus avoiding the additional medical costs of gum disease, savings could equal approximately \$7 billiion.

LUNG DISEASE

The mouth retains respiratory pathogens, so oral health affects lung health, especially for people with Ventilator-Associated BILLION Pneumonia (VAP).

> If 50% of VAP patients received oral care, estimated annual savings could reach \$5 billion.



EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

Many people wait until their dental pain becomes severe and end up in the ER, which is much costlier than care in a dental office.

> If 50% of dental-related emergency room visits were handled in a community setting, the system could save around \$826 million.

ORAL CANCER



Routine dental visits help detect oral cancer early on, which can lead to less complicated treatments, lower costs and higher survival rates.

If 20% more oral cancer cases were detected early, estimated annual savings would rang from \$338 million to \$495 million.

DENTAL SEALANTS

These coatings placed on the surface of teeth are a simple, effective way to prevent decay (and reduce spending on more involved care) among low-income children. MILLION

> If 50% of these children benefited from dental sealants, savings could equal around \$101 million.

Here's how we can promote the cost-effective power of oral care:

HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATIONS.

including insurance companies, can better integrate oral care into primary care as a core service.

can ensure their employees are covered for

oral health and establish wellness programs

to encourage use of this coverage.

BUSINESSES

POLICYMAKERS

can consider mandatory dental coverage to encourage regular care. They can redesign government programs to extend broader care to adults and children.

PEDIATRICIANS.

primary care physicians, and dental hygienists can learn to deliver more extensive care, also exploring models such as virtual exams and community-based oral health centers.

CONNECTING ORAL HEALTH TO OVERALL EALTH

An Unexpected Strategy for **Reducing Health Care Costs**

DIABETES

CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

ADVERSE PREGNANCY **OUTCOMES**

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Connecting Oral Health to Overall Health

<u>Diabetes</u>

People with diabetes, who have a weaker resistance to infection, are more susceptible to gum disease. In turn, gum infection may contribute to insulin resistance, making it harder for people with diabetes to keep their blood sugar stable.

<u>Pneumonia</u>

Bacteria in the mouth can be aspirated into the lungs, causing respiratory disease such as pneumonia.

<u>Adverse Pregnancy</u> <u>Outcomes</u>

Poor oral health may be linked to miscarriage, premature birth and low birth weight.

Emergency Room Visits

Toothaches remain a common reason to pursue emergency treatment.

<u>Coronary</u> Artery Disease

Bacteria in the mouth leads to oral inflammation, which appears to play a role in blood clots and clogged passageways.

<u>Cerebral Vascular</u> <u>Disease/Stroke</u>

Inflammation and infection caused by oral bacteria might be linked to heart disease, clogged arteries, stroke and endocarditis (when bacteria from the mouth or another part of the body takes up residence in the heart).

<u>Chronic Kidney</u> <u>Disease</u>

Severe gum disease increases the risk of death in chronic kidney disease patients.

<u>Menopause</u>

Oral health is an important part of health counseling for peri- and postmenopausal women, given that the incidence of

