

## “Gum disease links to heart disease and stroke”

(Aim West Milford, February 2011) Researchers have found that people with gum disease are almost twice as likely to suffer from coronary artery disease. In a recent study it was found that people diagnosed with acute inadequate blood supply in the brain were found more likely to have an oral infection, which includes gum disease, when compared to those in the control group. Gum disease can also cause existing heart conditions to worsen.

Over the past few years there has been a growing knowledge of the link between gum disease, heart problems and stroke. The cause and effect relationship is not fully understood yet but it is becoming clearer as more research is done.

One theory is that oral bacteria enter the blood stream, attach to fatty plaques and contribute to clot formation. Blood clots can restrict normal blood flow and contribute to heart attacks.

Another theory is that the inflammation caused by periodontal disease increases plaque build-up, which may contribute to swelling of the arteries. The bottom line is gum disease heavily increases your chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

Do yourself and your family a favor and get regularly scheduled cleanings and examinations at your dentist.

