Scary Dental Issue Quiz

Brush, floss, rinse, repeat. We've been hearing it since childhood and our dentists reminded us at every checkup. You've probably tuned out by now, but listen up! Did you know that most people still think a little bleeding is okay when brushing? It’s not. According to a dLife study, most people believe they have total control over their dental care. Yet, many don’t even know if bacteria in their mouths impact their blood sugar. We're here to tell you, because what you don’t know may scare you!

Are you sure you can spot potential gingivitis? Which of these is a symptom?
   a) Swollen and/or bleeding gums
   b) Bad breath
   c) Loose or shifting teeth
   d) All of the above

The Answer is d, all the above.

Gingivitis is an inflammation of the gums caused by long-term plaque buildup. The most common symptom of gingivitis is swollen and/or bleeding gums. However, a variety of other symptoms including bad breath, loose or shifting teeth, mouth sores, and shiny-looking gums may be indicative of the presence of gingivitis.

Treatment of gingivitis is simple. Visit your dentist regularly to remove plaque deposits, then maintain a good oral care regimen at home.

As a person with diabetes, your risk of periodontal disease is no greater or less than someone without diabetes.
   a) True
   b) False

The answer is false.

Did you know that 95% of people with diabetes have periodontal disease, which includes gingivitis and periodontitis? People with diabetes are already twice as likely as people without diabetes to develop periodontal disease. Those with poorly controlled diabetes are even more likely to develop the disease. Scary? Well, it is actually a vicious cycle because if you don't have diabetes yet, periodontal disease actually increases your risk! And that's not all! If gingivitis is not treated, the infection of the gums can spread into the bones and ligaments of the mouth, becoming periodontitis. In some cases, this can lead to tooth loss.

So what do you do if you have periodontitis? Your dentist will explain all the options. Often if infection has progressed, surgery to clean deep plaque deposits or
to support loose teeth (caused by bacteria eating away at the bone structure) may be necessary. So see your dentist regularly to avoid this!

**You will always know if you have a cavity because you will experience tooth pain.**

a) True  
b) False  

**The answer is false.**  

When a cavity is in the early stages of development, you may not notice any symptoms. Cavities are formed by bacteria that naturally grow in the mouth. These bacteria feed on sugar and release acids that destroy tooth enamel. Your dentist will, however, be able to detect these developing cavities, which is why its so important to regularly get professional dental cleanings!

**Bleeding gums are normal.**

a) True  
b) False  

**The answer is false.**  

Sometimes bleeding gums may indicate that you are brushing too hard or even using the wrong kind of toothbrush. Typically, bleeding gums are an early indicator of gum disease and for people with diabetes, it’s best not to take a chance on the first two options. Other indicators of gum disease include pain while chewing, soreness in the mouth and gums, and swollen gums. All of these can occur in people with diabetes, but can be prevented with good dental hygiene. If you experience any of these symptoms or other types of mouth discomfort, what do we say? See your dentist right away!

**Oral thrush is:**

a) A type of fungal infection  
b) A type of bird  
c) A method for cleaning your teeth  
d) None of the above  

**The answer is a, a type of fungal infection.**

Actually, oral thrush is caused by a fungal (yeast) infection. People with diabetes are at higher risk of developing thrush because the thrush-causing fungus thrives in sugary environment, such as the high sugar saliva of people with high blood sugars.
Symptoms of thrush are burning sensations in the mouth and/or tongue and white patches on the gums.

Your dentist will need to treat this for you and may prescribe an antifungal medication, antibiotic, or an antiseptic rinse.

**Having dry mouth increases your risk of developing:**
- a) Cavities
- b) Salivary gland infections
- c) Both a & b
- d) No associated risks

The answer is c, both a & d.

Dry mouth is caused by decreased saliva flow. Although it may seem to be a relatively benign condition, it actually carries with it increased risk of developing other oral complications such as cavities and salivary gland infections. Modifying your diet may help alleviate dry mouth. If severe, your doctor may prescribe medications such as pilocarpine (Salagen) or cevimeline (Evoxac) to stimulate saliva production. Your dentist can also fit you with a fluoride covering to wear at night.

**Which of the following is true about canker sores?**
- a) Canker sores are caused by a virus and are therefore contagious
- b) Eating a well-balanced diet will help reduce the likelihood of developing canker sores
- c) Canker sores and cold sores are equivalent
- d) All of the above

The answer is b.

Canker sores are a type of oral ulcer. Oral ulcers are any type of sores or open lesions in the mouth. Canker sores are common, but people with diabetes run a higher risk of developing canker sores and other types of ulcers. Good oral hygiene and a healthy diet will help reduce your chances of developing oral ulcers.

**The best way to treat halitosis (bad breath) is:**
- a) Tongue cleaning, with a special toothbrush or tongue scraper
- b) Chewing gum
- c) Good dental hygiene
- d) Using a bad breath remedy home treatment kit

The answer is c, good dental hygiene.
Because halitosis is extremely common, many companies advertise cure-all treatments for halitosis. While some may be effective in the short-run, the best way to both avoid and treat halitosis is by practicing long-term proper dental hygiene. Managing your diet, using mouthwash and chewing gum, cleaning your tongue, and taking a probiotic treatment may provide temporary relief.

0-2 That’s it?! You SHOULD be scared! There is so much more to learn about taking care of your teeth! Check out the links below and get into the know!

3-5 Not bad. Clearly, you do pay attention, but maybe you didn’t know about some common issues that you can avoid. Hopefully you learned them here. If not, you can always take the quiz again and then check out the links below for more information.

6-8 Well done! You know it’s not just about brushing your teeth, but flossing, using mouthwash and seeing your dentist regularly. Good for you!

What else can you do to take the best care of your teeth?

1. Control your blood sugar.

2. Use a soft-bristled toothbrush

3. Tell your dentist if you experience mouth pain, sores, etc.

4. Quit smoking. Smokers are up to 20 times more likely to develop oral conditions than nonsmokers

SOURCE: