



LS Dental

Ipoh · Dr. Kent Teoh

PATIENT GUIDE

Your mouth, an **early warning**

Teeth and gums can show the first signs of a body-wide illness — often before you feel unwell.

● **Bleeding gums**

● **Dry mouth**

● **Acid wear**

● **Sore tongue**

● **Slow healing**

Your mouth **mirrors** your health

The mouth has a rich blood supply and a thin, fast-changing lining, so it often shows the **first signs** of a whole-body problem. A dentist who sees you regularly can spot a change early — and send you to the right doctor.

**Gums that bleed or swell**

diabetes, blood disorders, vitamin lack

**A persistently dry mouth**

diabetes, Sjögren's, medicines

**Enamel worn thin**

acid reflux, eating disorders

**A sore or smooth tongue**

vitamin B12, iron or folate lack

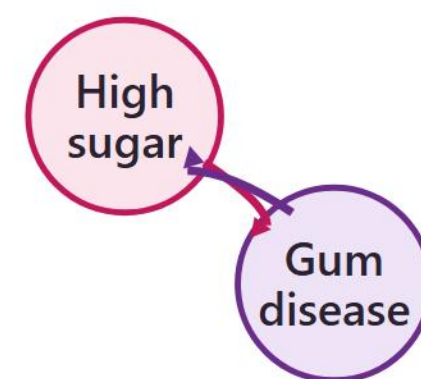
The point: none of these prove a disease on their own — but they're worth checking. Your dental visit can be the first step to catching something early.

Diabetes shows in your gums

High blood sugar feeds gum infection and slows healing — and inflamed gums push blood sugar higher in return. Gum disease that keeps coming back can be an early clue to **undiagnosed or poorly-controlled diabetes**.

- **Signs in the mouth**

- Gum disease that's **severe or keeps returning**
- Persistent dry mouth
- Oral thrush (white patches)
- Slow-healing sores; loose teeth
- Bad breath that won't clear



each one worsens the other

Good news: treating gum disease can help steady blood sugar — and controlling diabetes helps your gums heal. Tell your dentist if you have diabetes.

When bleeding gums **mean more**

Most bleeding gums are simple gingivitis — plaque that improves with better cleaning. But bleeding that is **heavy, spontaneous, or comes with easy bruising** can be an early sign of a **blood disorder such as leukemia**. Sometimes the mouth is the first place it shows.

● Usually just gingivitis

- Bleeds only when brushing/flossing
- Gums red at the margins
- **Improves** within days of better cleaning

See a doctor promptly

- **Spontaneous** bleeding, with no brushing
- Swollen gums that overgrow the teeth
- Tiny red/purple spots (petechiae)
- Easy bruising, fatigue, frequent infections



Don't just brush harder. Bleeding that won't settle in 1–2 weeks, or comes with bruising and tiredness, needs a blood test — not only a dental clean.

Acid wear you **can't taste**

Stomach acid that creeps up the food-pipe — from **reflux (GERD)** or repeated **vomiting** — dissolves enamel from the **inner and biting surfaces** of the teeth. It's a pattern a dentist recognises, often before reflux is diagnosed.

● What the dentist sees

- Smooth, shiny, **thinning** enamel
- Wear on the **back of the upper front teeth**
- Cupped, sensitive back teeth
- Yellower look as enamel thins

Common causes

- Acid reflux / heartburn (GERD)
- Repeated vomiting (eating disorders)
- Very frequent fizzy or sour drinks

Tip: don't brush right after acid or vomiting — rinse with water first, brush later.

Why it matters: spotting the wear pattern can uncover silent reflux — treating the cause protects both your teeth and your food-pipe.

A sore tongue & a dry mouth

What's missing shows up too. Vitamin gaps change the **tongue and lips**, and too little saliva lets decay race ahead.

VITAMIN C (SCURVY)

Swollen, **bleeding gums** and slow healing — from a diet very low in fresh fruit and vegetables.

B12 / IRON / FOLATE

A **sore, smooth, red tongue** (glossitis), mouth ulcers, and **cracks at the mouth corners**.

DRY MOUTH

From **Sjögren's**, many medicines, or after radiotherapy — saliva protects teeth, so decay speeds up.

WHY IT MATTERS

These are often **reversible** — the right diet, supplements, or saliva care fixes the mouth and the cause.

Dry mouth self-care: sip water often, chew sugar-free gum, avoid alcohol mouthwashes, and ask about saliva substitutes.

Signs to **act on**

Most mouth changes are harmless and pass in a week or two. A few need prompt attention — and one question can prevent a serious jaw problem.

GET IT CHECKED

- An ulcer or sore that **hasn't healed in 2 weeks**
- A lump, red or white patch that won't go
- Numbness, or a tooth loose for no reason

These can be early signs of oral cancer — early checks save lives.

TELL YOUR DENTIST

- Bone-strengthening medicine (for osteoporosis)
- Before removing an upper or lower tooth
- Gum overgrowth after starting a new medicine

Some bone medicines raise the risk of jaw healing problems after extractions.

A change in your mouth that won't settle?

A quick check can reassure you — or catch something early and point you to the right care.



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