

Other Health Problems of Unmanaged Diabetes

When you have Type 2 Diabetes, high blood glucose can affect the health of many parts of your body, including your dental health, bladder health and sexual health, leading to serious long term problems that can greatly affect your life.

Glucose, a form of sugar, travels through your bloodstream to all parts of your body. But it can also be found in your saliva. High levels of glucose in your saliva can lead to the formation of plaque on your teeth and cause gum disease, bad breath, tooth decay, cavities and eventually tooth loss.

Uncontrolled blood glucose levels can make gum disease more severe and infections can take longer to heal. At the same time, gum disease can make it harder to manage diabetes because oral infections may raise blood glucose levels.

To protect your dental health, take action to keep your blood glucose in a healthy range.

Brush your teeth at least twice a day using a soft bristle toothbrush for at least 3 minutes per brushing. And floss at least once a day.

See your dentist every 6 months to have your teeth and gums cleaned and checked. But if at any time it looks like your gums are: red, swollen, tender, or bleeding contact your dentist and make an appointment to have your teeth and gums looked at.

It is better to treat problems as soon as possible - before they have a chance to develop into something more serious.

High blood glucose levels can also affect the health of your bladder and urinary tract. In fact, people with diabetes have a greater risk of urinary tract infections or UTI's. If left untreated, UTI's can move into your kidneys.

Symptoms of a Urinary Tract Infection include: pain or burning when you urinate, feeling like you have to urinate all the time even though no urine may come out, cloudy or dark colored urine, blood in your urine, pain in your lower back, and fever.

You may also notice that your blood glucose levels are higher than normal even though you have followed your management plan.

If you experience any of these symptoms, call your diabetes care team to get the treatment you need.

And finally, high blood glucose can affect the sexual health of both women and men.

In women, vaginal infections can develop so tell your diabetes care team about any unusual discharge and itching.

And in men, high blood glucose levels can lead to erectile dysfunction or impotence.

Sexual dysfunction can be uncomfortable to talk about, but is an important part of leading a healthy life.

Other Health Problems of Unmanaged Diabetes

Tell your diabetes care team if you notice any of the following: a decrease in sexual desire, arousal or ability to achieve orgasm, impotence in men, and vaginal dryness or infections in women.

There are many possible causes of sexual dysfunction and a variety of management strategies. Keeping your blood glucose in your target range is a good place to start, and may slow or reverse the development of such difficulties.

High blood glucose levels over time can affect your dental health, bladder health and sexual health. But there are steps you can take to protect your health and prevent or delay these problems.

Follow your management plan to keep your blood glucose in a healthy range.

Meet with your diabetes care team on a regular basis to review your blood glucose results. At each appointment make sure your diabetes care team checks for any long term health problems diabetes may cause.

Between visits, if you do notice any signs or symptoms of these health problems, make an appointment to meet with your diabetes care team right away. Do not ignore them! Instead, get the treatment you need to protect your body, before a manageable problem becomes more serious.