

Asthma and Your Oral Health



Over 24 million Americans have asthma, a chronic lung disease that usually develops in childhood.

This condition can put you at risk for various dental problems. Find out what you can do to protect your teeth and gums.

Did you know...
that asthma
can put your
teeth at risk?

Oral health risks linked to asthma

- **Dry mouth.** Asthma medication and breathing through your mouth can reduce your saliva.
- **Bad breath.** Lack of saliva is a primary cause of halitosis.
- **Cavities.** Dry mouth causes plaque to build up, putting you at higher risk of tooth decay.
- **Gum disease.** Untreated plaque can lead to infection of the gums.
- **Oral sores.** Inhalers may cause irritation and lesions at the back of your mouth.

Protect yourself

- **Drink water.** Keep yourself hydrated to prevent dry mouth, eliminate bad breath and reduce your chance of developing cavities and gum disease.
- **Brush and floss.** Be especially thorough to counteract the risks associated with asthma.
- **Talk to your dentist.** Let your dentist know that you have asthma and mention any medications you're taking.
- **Reduce anxiety.** Being stressed about a dental visit can induce an asthma attack. Avoid caffeine and eat a balanced meal before your appointment, and remember to take deep breaths as soon as you feel anxious.
- **Control your asthma.** Know your asthma triggers, and find ways to reduce contact with these triggers. For example, you may opt to exercise indoors, use an air purifier or keep pets out of your home or bedroom. Learn the warning signs of an asthma attack so that you can avoid severe episodes.



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