

ASK DR. CANZONERI

Alzheimer's and the Dental Link



Dr. Kenneth CANZONERI,
D.D.S.

Q:

Dear Dr. KC:

I recently thought I heard something about a link between gum disease and Alzheimer's. I have always had bleeding gums and I have a family history of Alzheimer's in my family. Should I be worried?

Signed: Worried

Dear Worried:

New research evidence has found that a bacteria that is largely responsible for gum disease also contributes to the development of Alzheimer's disease. How this works is that bacteria found in gum disease migrate from the mouth to the brain and release a toxic protein that destroys brain neurons.

We live in such a different world now! Dentists once simply drilled and filled teeth with cavities and cleaned teeth once or twice a year. Now dentists must realize that we are at the forefront of preventing disease of the human body. The Surgeon General reports

that at least 80 percent of American adults have gum disease and we know that the bacteria in your mouth travel to other parts of your body in your bloodstream.

Researchers have found links between inflammation in your mouth and diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, heart disease, strokes, pancreatic and kidney cancer, increased risk of premature death, high blood pressure and other links are being studied as I write this article.

In dentistry inflammation in the gums can be called gingivitis, periodontal disease, pyorrhea, bleeding during brushing and other descriptive words but my main point is that bleeding

gums cannot be tolerated and must be eliminated.

In my office dental lasers are used to assist in treating gum disease along with other options we have at our disposal in a modern dental office. The mentality of "my gums have always bled" or "my gums are always red" cannot be tolerated.

We only have one life! Let's live it as long and healthy as we can!

Dr. Kenneth Canzoneri maintains a private family practice in Arcadia, CA. He specializes in advanced laser dentistry and rebuilding smiles for both cosmetics and function. Please call (626) 446-1679 for an appointment or visit canzoneridentistry.com