Oral health and the body

**Hands and Feet**
Tooth loss, which can be linked to gum disease is also a predictor of rheumatoid arthritis. Several studies have shown that the more teeth loss the more at risk you may be for rheumatoid arthritis.

**HEART**
Poor oral health can be bad for your heart! If you are experiencing inflammation in the mouth it’s possible you could have bacteria in the blood stream which could potentially put you at risk for a heart attack or a stroke if you don’t. Brushing twice a day and flossing can help you prevent gum diseases that causes bacteria in the mouth.

**MOUTH**
Bacteria in the mouth can cause gingivitis (gum disease) where the gums become red, swollen and often bleed! When gingivitis is untreated it can lead to an even more severe gum disease called periodontitis which could cause the tissues and bone that supports the teeth to become destroyed leading to potential teeth loss! Brushing and flossing after meals regularly can help reduce your risk.

**Lungs**
Not only does harmful bacteria in the mouth cause periodontal (gum) disease but it has also been linked to increased risk of lung diseases like pneumonia and bronchitis.

**Pregnancy**
Pregnancy can sometimes put a woman with healthy gums at risk for gum increased inflammation called pregnancy gingivitis. Gum disease in pregnant women can increase potential risk for having a baby with a low birth weight (babies weighing less than 5.5lbs/2.49Kg).

**Breast Cancer**
Studies have linked women with severe gum disease, often indicated by missing molars, to an increased risk of breast cancer. One study showed that women with severe gum disease were found to be two times as likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer compared to those with healthy teeth and gums.

**Pancreas**
People with diabetes have an increased risk of periodontal (gum) disease. The pancreas which is responsible for producing insulin and helps regulate blood sugar is challenged when gum disease is present.

**Blood Vessels**
Did you know that oral bacteria can potentially harm your blood vessels, cause blood clots and even put you at risk for a heart attack? When bacteria enters into your blood stream it can release toxins that could damage the blood vessels wall and even make your blood clot easier.

**Brain**
Regular visits to the dentist can help you reduce your risk of a stroke! Research has shown that gum disease can be a risk factor for a stroke. Gingivitis and bone loss associated with poor oral health were direct links to increased stroke risk.

**Head and Neck**
Research has shown that poor oral health and limited access to dental health care has been associated with head and neck cancer patients. One report found that with each millimeter (One millimeter is about the size of the head of a pin.) of bone loss from oral bacteria the risk of head and neck cancer increased more than 4 times!