

Brush your teeth for a healthy heart

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Regular tooth-brushing could help stave off cardiovascular disease, according to a study from Scotland.

Brushing less than twice daily is thought to be a major cause of [periodontal disease](#) [1]Disease of the tissues that support the teeth, including the gums, the periodontal membrane and the underlying bone. Periodontal disease, which includes gingivitis and the more serious periodontitis, is the most common cause of loss of teeth in adults. People with HIV/AIDS are at increased risk of developing periodontal disease, even with good oral hygiene. and may also impair cardiovascular health.

According to the research, individuals who rarely or never brushed were 70% more likely to have a [heart attack](#) [2] or other cardiovascular disease event even after controlling for many other factors such as family history and smoking.

Low-grade inflammation appears to play a role. The literature clearly shows that raised proinflammatory cytokines are present in both cardiovascular disease and periodontal disease.

In the analysis, adjusted only for age and sex, the risk of a fatal or nonfatal event was 40% greater for those who brushed once rather than twice a day and 2.3-fold higher for those who brushed less than once a day.

More frequent tooth-brushing appears to be dose-dependently protective against cardiovascular disease events including [coronary artery](#) [3]One of the two arteries that supply the heart with oxygenated blood. bypass surgery, stroke, and heart failure.

BMJ 2010;340:c2451, <http://natap.org> [4]

1. [Cytokines](#) are any of several regulatory proteins, such as the interleukins and lymphokines, that are released by cells of the immune system and act as intercellular mediators in the generation of an immune response.

- [heart disease](#)
- [news](#)
- [oral health](#)

Links:

[1] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/115>

[2] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/103>

[3] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/94>

[4] <http://natap.org>