Trips to the Dentist

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Psoriasis and Trips to the Dentist

A recent study showed that having gum disease can be a factor in the development of psoriasis. In fact, over half of the people studied that had some form of gum disease were likely to develop psoriasis within the next 5 years. By managing your oral health, you could potentially be affecting the presence or severity of psoriasis symptoms.

Good Oral Hygiene Can Prevent Most Dental Problems

The key to preventing gum disease and multiple trips to the dentist is by practicing a rigorous oral hygiene routine at home. Brush at least twice a day for two minutes and floss daily. Not cleaning between your teeth or long enough can cause gingivitis to develop, which then turns into gum disease. Symptoms of these conditions include:

- Bleeding gums
- Swollen gum tissue
- Gum recession

Thankfully, gingivitis is completely reversible, and symptoms typically stop within 2 weeks of daily flossing and proper brushing. If not, gum disease as well as bone loss may be present. Schedule at least 2 cleanings per year to remove tartar buildup and clean areas that are hard to reach. Your hygienist can give you advice on home oral hygiene techniques to reduce bacterial buildup that cause gum disease.

Reduce Flare-Ups Caused by Stressful Dental Visits

Being anxious or scared about your dental appointment could cause your psoriasis to worsen around the times of your dental visits. Whatever it takes to help you relax, do it! It may mean bringing headphones and your favorite playlist to your appointment or even toting a blanket in with you to stay warm in the treatment room. Perhaps you've found a dentist that uses lasers instead of drills - this is something a lot of people appreciate and find helps them stay relaxed throughout treatment procedures.

It doesn't hurt to ask for laughing gas, an anxiety medication, or a mild sedative to help you through your appointment. Many people do this already, and if you know you're prone to flare-ups after dental treatment, then a little extra help relaxing won't hurt one bit. Most dentists are able to prescribe medication to existing patients prior to their appointment, allowing you to take it before you arrive (just make sure you have someone there to drive you).

The more comfortable you are with your dental care, the less risk there is of developing a flare-up of your symptoms before or during your appointment. Routine check-ups will mean that dental needs can be diagnosed when they are smaller and easier to treat, reducing the extent of dental care and the number of visits that you need later on. Don't put your dental care off, even if you don't like it. The better care you take of your smile, the

better you'll feel.

Gum disease has already been shown to be linked to dozens of other types of systemic diseases, but the connection with psoriasis is a new one, and being that over half of the test subjects had a connection makes it a significant discovery.