



THE ORAL SYSTEMIC LINK

CE Course Worksheet

1. How oral health impacts overall body health is the _____ - _____ link.
2. A Community of bacteria in the mouth is called _____.
3. _____ is the body's immune response that can spread systemically.
4. Periodontal disease is gum infection that damages _____ tissue and _____.
5. The mouth is a gateway to the rest of the body. True False (circle one)
6. Harmful bacteria in the mouth can _____ thru the _____ in the _____.
7. A healthy mouth = healthy body. True False (circle one)
8. Dental Assistants need to know about the mouth body connection because:
 - a. Many offices rely on DAs to _____ prevention and _____ basics
 - b. In practices without hygienists, Das may be the _____ educator
 - c. Learning the oral systemic link = contributes to the _____
 - d. Builds _____ and elevates _____ value in the office
9. Personal note regarding your past experience/knowledge about the connection between oral health and overall health. _____

10. A sticky layer of bacteria on the teeth and gums is called _____.
11. _____ are harmful bacteria that cause disease. (FYI: not all bacteria cause disease – in fact, most do NOT!)
12. How many microorganisms live in the mouth? _____
13. The stages of biofilm growth include:
 - a. Stage 1: _____ (protein layers of saliva) formation and bacteria _____
 - b. Stage 2: Bacteria _____ and the biofilm _____
 - c. Stage 3: Mature biofilm _____ harmful bacteria (hard to remove at this stage)
14. Commensals/Oral Microflora (see Stage 1 of the diagram on this slide) are friendly or _____ bacteria that live in the mouth and other parts of the body. They are good!
15. A shift in the BALANCE between _____ and _____ bacteria causes the formation of _____.
16. Signs of diseased gingiva include:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____ easily
 - d. Bad _____

17. Diseased gums are red and swollen because:
- _____ bacteria build up along the _____, then . . .
 - the body sees them as a threat and sends _____ cells to fight the infection, this causes . . .
 - An increase in _____ which brings defense cells to the rescue causing the gingiva to become red and swollen.
18. A fever is a good thing when you are sick (the increased temperature helps to fight the infection). True False
19. _____ gums are a sign the body is fighting bacteria.
20. Healthy gums are _____ and _____ and don't bleed when brushing and flossing.
21. **Cocci** bacteria are:
- round / spiral shaped (circle one)
 - healthy / pathogenic (circle one)
22. **Spirochetes** are:
- round / spiral shaped (circle one)
 - healthy / pathogenic (circle one)
23. Chronic _____ destroys gum tissue and _____.
24. Inflammatory signals and the bacteria in the mouth _____ throughout the body and are linked to heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, etc.
25. The fancy word for bad breath is _____.
26. YOU can notice the _____ of gum disease, _____ good home care, and communicate concerns with your dentist and/or hygienist.
27. Add the correct term for each of the following definitions:

DEFINITION	TERM
When two conditions make each other worse.	
Breathing bacteria from the mouth into the lungs.	
Inflammation that affects the brain.	
When the immune system mistakenly attacks the body's own tissues.	
Body wide response that links gum disease to multiple conditions.	
Infection of the inner lining of the heart, sometimes caused by oral bacteria.	

HEART HEALTH AND GUM DISEASE

28. When there is inflammation in the gums, the _____ can enter the _____ during everyday activities such as brushing and chewing.
29. This bacteria and the inflammatory chemicals they incite can lead to the build-up of _____ plaque.
30. This raises the risk for heart _____, _____ and _____.

DIABETES AND GUM DISEASE

31. Inflammatory chemicals (produced by pathogenic bacteria) make it _____ to control blood _____.
32. These inflammatory chemicals interfere with how _____ works.
33. Glucose stays in the bloodstream instead of moving into other _____ where it belongs.
34. High blood sugar _____ the immune defenses making it harder for the body to fight of bacteria.
35. So . . . diabetes can lead to gum disease AND gum disease can contribute to diabetes. True False
36. Diabetics are _____ as likely to get gum disease than those without diabetes.

PREGNANCY AND GUM DISEASE

37. Pregnancy hormones can make gums more _____ and reactive to _____.
38. Pregnant women with gum disease are at a higher risk for:
 - a. _____ birth
 - b. Low birth _____
 - c. _____
39. Mild bleeding during pregnancy is normal and not concerning if there is excellent oral homecare.
True False

RESPIRATORY HEALTH AND GUM DISEASE

40. Oral bacteria can travel to the lungs called: _____.
41. This bacteria in the lungs can _____ the risk of pneumonia and _____ flare-ups.
42. There is a higher risk of respiratory issues from oral bacteria in the _____ and patients who are _____.

BRAIN HEALTH AND GUM DISEASE

43. Gum disease and inflammation release inflammatory _____ into the bloodstream and those can affect blood vessels and nerve tissues.
44. This can lead to _____ which can impact memory and cognition.

AUTOIMMUNE AND RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS AND GUM DISEASE

45. Gum bacteria can _____ the immune system which can worsen _____ inflammation in patients with rheumatoid arthritis.
46. Treating gum disease _____ help reduce symptoms in these patients.

CANCER AND GUM DISEASE

47. Inflammation releases chemicals and bacterial _____ that can damage cells and affect how they _____ themselves.
48. This causes abnormal cells to develop.
49. The strongest association with gum disease and cancer is with:
- a. _____ cancer
 - b. _____ cancers
 - c. Esophageal cancer

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50. Keep it _____ when talking with patients about the oral health.
51. Use relatable _____.
52. Focus on _____ and _____ - NOT FEAR.
53. Use short and _____ explanations.
54. Complete the following chart:

COMMUNICATION DO'S	COMMUNICATION DON'TS
Use _____ words.	Use medical _____
Encourage _____	_____ Patients
Show _____	Give medical _____
Reinforce positive _____	

55. Key takeaways:
- a. Oral health = _____
 - b. Gum disease is directly connected with many systemic _____.
 - c. DA are _____ for patient support and reinforcing health habits.
56. Bleeding gums are _____ normal!
57. If teeth don't hurt, the mouth is healthy. True False
58. Losing teeth is just a part of getting aging. True False

GOOD JOB! Now take the quiz and get your CEUs!

