

# WYOMING DEEP™ FACILITATOR BULLETIN



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## ADMINISTRATIVE TIDBITS

Greetings, Wyoming DEEP facilitators!

Spring is nearly here! We currently have ongoing classes across the state. Thank you for all the work you do to help participants with diabetes and pre-diabetes become empowered and more knowledgeable about their condition.

Reminder: In [our last newsletter](#), we shared the new DEEP curriculum and the crosswalk that highlights the changes. If you have not had a chance to review these documents, please take a few moments to do so.

This issue highlights the importance of good oral health for people with diabetes. We hope you find the information useful as you teach your classes.

Tuesday, March 27, is American Diabetes Association® Alert Day. Mountain-Pacific will be highlighting additional tools and information that may be useful to you. To find them, [find us on Facebook](#).

Once again, thank you for all your hard work. We appreciate all you do to support this program. We could not make the impact we are without you!

Sincerely,

Brandi Wahlen, Diabetes Project Manager

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## DEEP IMPACT

Here's a peek at our success story from across Wyoming, as told by some of our current numbers:

- **281 graduates** of the Diabetes Empowerment Education Program (DEEP)™
- **206 of those graduates are Medicare beneficiaries**, helping Mountain-Pacific Quality Health get that much closer to its goal of 237 graduated beneficiaries by the end of this July!
- As of March 9, 2018, **15 out of 25 graduates** with pre and post A1c data had their sugar levels stay the same or go down.

Congratulations, and thank you!

# FACILITATOR EDUCATION

## DIABETES AND DENTAL HEALTH: THERE IS A CONNECTION

by Tonette Hollingsworth, RDH, MS  
Montana Department of Health and Human Services Oral Health Program Coordinator

**Diabetes problems that affect the eyes, kidneys and feet are well known, but the impact of poor blood sugar control can have just as an important impact on the mouth.**



People who have diabetes are at higher risk for periodontal (gum) disease, which is an infection in the tissue and bone that support teeth. Left untreated, the infection progresses, and people often experience bad breath, pain, loose teeth and even tooth loss. This can significantly impact nutrition, because eating a healthy diet of fruits, vegetables and lean meats becomes more difficult. Even people with dentures and diabetes should be aware of sores in the mouth to prevent mouth infections and altered nutrition.

Good oral health promotes total body health. Bacteria in the mouth can contribute to heart disease and stroke, both health risks for people with diabetes. Alterations in the vascular and immune systems increase the risk for dental problems in people with uncontrolled diabetes. Complications related to diabetes also make treating periodontal disease more difficult, due to the decreased ability to fight off the bad bacteria in the mouth. Getting regular dental exams and cleanings will prevent the start of the disease.

The relationship also goes the other way. Research suggests untreated

periodontal disease can make it more difficult to control blood sugar levels.

What can DEEP facilitators do to promote dental health and support overall health?

- Ask about frequency of dental visits.
- Facilitate discussions about home dental habits, just like foot care.
- Ask about gum disease and talk about the relationship between diabetes and mouth health.
- Keep in mind that we need to be healthy from head to toe, including the mouth, to prevent and control chronic diseases.

To keep a healthy mouth, advise people with diabetes to:

- Control their blood sugar.
- Brush and floss daily.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Visit the dentist and ask about periodontal assessments (probe readings).
- Talk to the dentist about blood sugar control issues and bleeding gums or bad breath.

Need help finding a dental provider? Use this Find-a-Dentist® tool: <https://findadentist.ada.org/>

For more information: <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/health-info/diabetes/more-info>

### FOR YOUR TOOLBOX

**Diabetes and Your Smile:** [This article](#) discusses the connection between diabetes and gum and teeth health and provides a “diabetes dental health action plan.”

**Diabetes, Gum Disease and Other Dental Problems:** The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases breaks down [how diabetes affects the mouth](#) and defines common conditions related to oral health.

**American Diabetes Association – Diabetes and Oral Health Problems:** [Get the answers](#) to five common questions when it comes to how oral health relates to diabetes and diabetes relates to oral health.

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Help sound the alarm on American Diabetes Association Alert Day, coming up on Tuesday, March 27. [Get more information, tools and resources here.](#)