

HEALTH

When It Comes to Your Health, Your Heart Is in Your Mouth

NewsUSA

(NU) - For years, you may have overlooked a handy tool in the fight against cardiovascular disease – your toothbrush.

Studies link tooth and gum health to heart health. A 2005 review from Finland's Helsinki University Central Hospital, which was published in the "Journal of Periodontology," found that chronic inflammation, such as that found in gum disease, increases the risk that a patient will develop heart disease. A 2010 survey of 12,000 people in Scotland found that, over an average of eight years, those who rarely or never brushed their teeth were 70 percent more likely to develop heart disease than those with twice-daily brushing habits.

Researchers don't quite know how the connection between oral health and heart health works, but that doesn't mean that you should dismiss the link. Brushing your teeth might be the easiest, simplest way to keep your heart healthy.

Of course, brushing your teeth isn't the only way to take care of your mouth. Here are some tips:

- **Avoid smoking.** If you smoke, stopping is absolutely the best thing you can do to improve your health. Speak to your doctor or dentist about ways to help you quit.
- **Use oral care probiotics in addition to brushing and flossing.** You can do more than simply brushing and flossing every day. Oral care probiotics, like Evo-



Taking care of your mouth might be the easiest way to support your heart health.

raPlus (www.myevoraplus.com), may help make up the difference. Probiotics, or good bacteria, adhere to tooth surfaces, where they leave less room for harmful bacteria to attach to grow.

- **Don't let sugar stay on your teeth between brushings.** Drink water after eating or drinking liquids to rinse your teeth. Don't bathe your teeth in sugar all day by continuously eating or sipping beverages like soda. Instead, have sugary liquids with meals and limit snacking. Stay away from foods that are likely to stick to teeth, such as candy, and try having an apple instead. Apples increase saliva production, so they actually help rinse your mouth of cavity-causing bacteria.

To learn more, visit www.myevoraplus.com.