

Physician-dentist collaboration recommended in diabetes care

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"With the projected rise in chronic diseases, including diabetes, and the growing shortage of [primary care physicians](#), it is ever more important for dental and medical health care providers to work together closely to tackle this public health crisis," the authors write.

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(HealthDay)—Dentists are uniquely placed to identify patients with diabetes, and those with diabetes who are at risk for complications, according to an article published in the October issue of *Clinical Diabetes*.

Satheesh Elangovan, B.D.S., Sc.D., D.M.Sc., from the University of Iowa College of Dentistry in Iowa City, and colleagues discuss the interrelationships between [diabetes](#) and dental conditions, providing insights for both dental and medical professionals.

The researchers note that more older people visit a dentist than a [primary care](#) physician (in 2011, about 58 percent of those aged ≥65 years visited a dentist versus 38 percent who visited a primary care doctor). Diabetes has several oral manifestations and dentists can potentially identify patients with diabetes who are at risk. Patients could be placed on a recall program as a preventive measure, providing an opportunity for monitoring. Periodontal examinations can also be used to identify people with diabetes, with 92 percent accuracy seen in one study involving 506 dental patients. Dentists should also be trained to recognize patients at high risk for diabetes. Dentists and their auxiliary staff can also provide guidance for patients and help them attain glycemic control.

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