

Weighing in on Obesity and gum disease.



Measuring your height and weight may seem out of place in a dental office. It shouldn't. Research has confirmed that obesity is a strong risk factor for gum disease. When you are overweight your body over-produces inflammatory mediators. Some of these mediators make it easier for gum disease to take root and to worsen.

But, the story gets even more interesting. Obesity is now recognized as a risk factor for many of the chronic diseases of aging like heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, gallstones, breathing problems, and certain cancers. Common gum disease has also been shown to increase the risk for these serious diseases.

Thus, if you are over your ideal weight you really need to do whatever is necessary to eliminate any gum disease in your mouth and then keep it at bay. Watching and waiting can be dangerous in your case – things can get worse in a hurry. We may have to treat your gum disease more aggressively than patients who are not overweight.

We will recommend seeing you more frequently than twice a year. We know through solid research that it takes about 2-3 months for bacteria to reorganize and cause disease. Since it is easier for bacteria to lead to problems in your case we need to see you more frequently to make sure that we eliminate any small flare-ups before they turn into bigger problems.

Body Mass Index (BMI)

Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number calculated from a person's weight and height. BMI provides a reliable indicator of body fatness for most people and is used to screen for weight categories that may lead to health problems.

Your BMI is _____

BMI Categories:

- Underweight = <18.5
- Normal weight = 18.5–24.9
- Overweight = 25–29.9
- Obesity = BMI of 30 or greater

For more info: www.cdc.gov/healthyweight