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FEBRUARY 2015

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Whole-Wheat Cranberry Muffins

**Recipe courtesy of the American Heart Association*
Serves 12; 1 muffin per serving

INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cup uncooked quick-cooking oatmeal
- 1/2 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup sweetened dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup toasted wheat germ
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 3/4 cup pineapple juice
- Egg substitute equivalent to 1 egg, or 1 large egg
- 1 tbsp canola or corn oil
- 2 tbsp unsalted sunflower seeds



DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 °F. Lightly spray a 12-cup muffin pan with cooking spray or put paper muffin cups in the pan.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together the oatmeal, flours, brown sugar, cranberries, wheat germ, baking powder, and baking soda. Make a well in the center. Pour the pineapple juice, egg substitute, and oil into the well, stirring until just moistened. Do not overmix; the batter should be slightly lumpy. Spoon the batter evenly into the muffin cups. Sprinkle with the sunflower seeds.
3. Bake for 11 to 12 minutes, or until a cake tester or wooden toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean. These muffins don't need a cooling time before removing from the pan.

Per serving: Calories 144; Total fat 2.5 g; Saturated fat 0.5 g; Trans fat 0 g; Polyunsaturated fat 1 g; Monounsaturated fat 1 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 107 mg; Carbohydrates 28 g; Sugars 15 g; Fiber 2 g; Protein 3 g



American Heart Association | American Stroke Association®

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February Means Heart Disease Awareness!



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ASHLY COTHERN DDS

ACTUAL PATIENTS



DEAR FRIENDS,

I hope your 2015 has started out to be a great year. Our family has hit the ground running! Our oldest daughter has turned double digits now and is playing lots of soccer and doing lots of gymnastics. Next in line, our 8 yr old has her first gymnastics meet coming up and is busy playing academy soccer, too. Our eldest boy is finishing up preschool and loves being on the ice playing hockey. The baby boy enjoys his days with friends at preschool and loves playing with his older siblings. As for mom and dad, we just try to keep up!

As for the practice, I continue to be thankful to do what I do. I love coming to work each day alongside some of my best friends in order to serve our patients. We are so excited to celebrate Heart Health Month and to walk alongside our patients as they become healthier and learn to live longer! Brush and floss...it just might extend your life!

~ Dr. Cothorn



photos by: abby white photography

DID YOU KNOW...

- Approximately 18-30 million adult suffer from sleep apnea
- 30% of patients with hypertension have obstructive sleep apnea (OSA)
- 40-80% of stroke victims also suffer from OSA



SomnoDent is a custom-made oral appliance for the treatment of mild to moderate obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). SomnoDent is worn during sleep to provide Continuous Open Airway Therapy (COAT) by moving the lower jaw slightly forward. This movement tightens the soft tissue and muscles of the upper airway, which prevents obstructive apneas while you sleep. Contact the office to learn more about the Somnodent Sleep Apnea device that can provide more restful nights and refreshing days! **Contact us to learn more.**



Cassidy's first baby girl, **Emma Rose** made her appearance on January 21, 2015 weighing 6 lbs 1 oz! Congratulations!!



The Daily Floss Tips from your Hygienist



Having good dental hygiene and health - especially your gums - can give you more than a gleaming, healthy smile. It may keep your heart healthy too!

Studies have shown that people with moderate or advanced gum periodontal disease are more likely to have heart disease than those with healthy gums. So be sure to use your electric toothbrush twice a day, floss daily, and keep your regular dental hygiene cleaning appointments in order to have a healthy mouth. And a healthy heart! ~ Kimberly, RDH

HEALTHY HABITS TO PREVENT Heart Disease

Read full article by Nora Bass: <https://www.goredforwomen.org>

QUIT SMOKING - We know smoking is bad for our health and that research shows quitting smoking reduces our heart risk. Now is the time to quit!

CONSISTENT EXERCISE - Regular physical activity has many benefits such as helping you quit smoking, lose weight, reduce stress, lower blood pressure and increase HDL cholesterol.

MANAGE STRESS - It's important to learn how to recognize how stress affects you, learn how to deal with it, and develop healthy habits to ease your stress. Stress is your body's response to change. The body reacts to it by releasing adrenaline (a hormone) that causes your breathing and heart rate to speed up, and your blood pressure to rise. Constant or continuous stress can be harmful to your heart health. The good news is you can actively manage your stress before it becomes a problem.

EAT HEALTHY - Do you really know what it means to eat healthy? The AHA recently developed new dietary guidelines to help us better understand how to eat healthy and help lower our heart disease risk.

- Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, poultry, fish and nuts
- Avoid red meat, as well as sugary and processed foods
- Avoid foods high in sodium

"Eating a healthy diet is not about good foods and bad foods in isolation from the rest of your diet - it's about the overall diet," said Robert Eckel, M.D., previous AHA president and co-chair of the new guideline committee.

BRUSHING AND FLOSSING MAY ACTUALLY *save your life.*

If you're worried about heart disease, you can easily spend thousands of dollars each year trying to prevent it, paying hand over fist for prescription medicines, shelves of healthy cookbooks, fitness machines for your home, and a gym membership. Or maybe not. A number of recent studies suggest that you may already have a cheap and powerful weapon against heart attacks, strokes, and other heart disease conditions. It costs less than \$2 and is sitting on your bathroom counter. It is none other than the humble toothbrush.

"There are a lot of studies that suggest that oral health, and gum disease in particular, are related to serious conditions like heart disease," says periodontist Sally Cram, DDS, a spokeswoman for the American Dental Association. So can preventing periodontal disease, a disease of the gums and bone that support the teeth, with brushing and flossing prevent heart disease?

The evidence isn't clear yet, experts say, but it's intriguing. According to the American Academy of Periodontology, people with periodontal disease are almost twice as likely to have coronary artery disease (also called heart disease). And one study found that the presence of common problems in the mouth, including gum disease (gingivitis), cavities, and missing teeth, were as good at predicting heart disease as cholesterol levels.

EVIDENCE LINKS PERIODONTAL DISEASE AND HEART HEALTH

When it comes to the connection between periodontal disease and heart disease, epidemiologist Moise Desvarieux, MD, PhD, is used to dealing with skeptics. "One of the talks I give is called, 'Investigating the Links Between Periodontal Infection and Vascular Disease: Are We Nuts?'" says Desvarieux, from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. "It's not a connection that people naturally think of."

Desvarieux was the lead author of a recent study published in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association* that studied 657 people without known heart disease. He and his co-authors found that people who had higher blood levels of certain disease-causing bacteria in the mouth were more likely to have atherosclerosis in the carotid artery in the neck. Clogging of the carotid arteries can lead to stroke.

Atherosclerosis, also called "hardening of the arteries," develops when deposits of fats and other substances in your blood begin to stick to the sides of your arteries. These deposits, called plaques, can build up and narrow your arteries, clogging them like a plugged-up drain. If these plaques ever block the blood flow completely, you

could have a heart attack or stroke, depending on the location of the blockage. (Note: Not all plaque is alike. The plaques in your arteries have nothing to do with dental plaque your dentist scrapes off your teeth. Dental plaque is a sticky residue of bacteria, acid, and food particles that can irritate your gums and eat away at tooth enamel.)

So what might hardening of the arteries have to do with gingivitis, that minor villain of toothpaste and mouthwash commercials? No one is sure yet. Experts know that bacteria from the mouth can enter the bloodstream through the gums. These same bacteria have been found clumped in artery plaques. So one theory is that these bacteria stick to the fatty plaques in the bloodstream, directly contributing to blockages.

Other possibilities lie in the body's own defense mechanisms against bacteria. One of the body's natural responses to infection is inflammation (swelling). It's possible that as these oral bacteria travel through your body, they trigger a similar response, causing the blood cells to swell. This swelling could then narrow an artery and increase the risk of clots. That inflammation could be the root of the problem adds to data researchers are gathering that suggest more and more diseases, including periodontal disease, heart disease, and arthritis, are partially caused by the body's own inflammatory response.

COULD PERIODONTAL DISEASE CAUSE HEART ATTACKS?

So could periodontal disease, gingivitis, or another dental disorder, pericoronitis (when gum tissue around the molars becomes swollen and infected) cause heart attacks and strokes? It's far too early to say.

"There's no question that there appears to be a connection," says Gordon Douglass, DDS, past president of the American Academy of Periodontology. "But the exact relationship between cardiovascular disease and periodontal disease isn't clear." "It's like the chicken and the egg," says Desvarieux. "In our study, we know that people who had higher levels of the bacteria had more arteriosclerosis, or atherosclerosis. But we can't say whether one caused the other." The only way to know, he says, is to follow up the people in his study to see how they fare in the long term.

But even if periodontal disease isn't actually causing heart disease, the connection could still be important. For instance, periodontal disease might be an early sign of cardiovascular problems. Heart disease can be hard to catch early, because many of the conditions that precede it have no symptoms. You won't ever feel your arteries hardening or your cholesterol rising. But you might notice bleeding or painful gums.

If further studies bear out the connection between periodontal disease and heart disease, the next step would be to try treatment, Desvarieux says. Might taking antibiotics not

only help heal oral infections but, as a result, also lower your risk of heart disease? No one's sure, but it's possible. It's still too early for official preventive steps, since researchers don't know exactly how heart disease and periodontal disease are connected.

"Obviously, people worried about heart disease need to pay attention to the established risk factors," Desvarieux tells WebMD. "I wouldn't want people to think that if they just started to brush their teeth more, they could go back to smoking or ignore their diabetes."

IF YOU'RE AT RISK OF HEART DISEASE, DO THE OBVIOUS:

- Lose weight if you're overweight
- Eat healthy foods
- Exercise most days of the week
- Control any conditions that increase risk, such as diabetes, high cholesterol, or high blood pressure

But Cram of the ADA argues that everyone should make a special effort to prevent oral health problems. That's especially true, she says, for people who are at higher risk of developing heart disease. And Douglass adds that if you already have periodontal disease, you certainly shouldn't ignore it. In many cases, you may just need to learn better brushing and flossing habits. More advanced cases of periodontal disease may require a trip to the dentist for a careful cleaning of the roots of the teeth, called scaling and root planning, or surgery.

"I think the evidence indicates that you should clear up any periodontal disease," Douglass tells WebMD. "It's fairly easy to do, and why not get rid of a potential risk factor for heart disease?"

He also stresses that people who have heart problems or recently had cardiac surgery may need to take antibiotics before having any dental procedures. Medication will lower the risk that bacteria from the mouth will wind up infecting the tissues of the heart, causing a dangerous condition called endocarditis.

For most people, however, Douglass says that sticking with commonsense tips can head off problems. "If you keep your mouth clean, it's very hard for the bacteria that cause periodontal disease to get started," he says. You'll also reap other benefits - fewer fillings, healthier gums, and a brighter smile.

"We've always known that a little prevention goes a long way, but we used to think of it in terms of avoiding cavities and things like that," says Cram. "Now it seems that by using your toothbrush and your floss, you might also be preventing much more serious health problems down the road."