

# **ARE YOUR TEETH MAKING YOU SICK?**

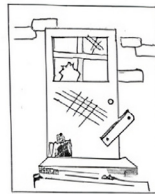
**THE ANSWER IS RIGHT  
UNDER YOUR NOSE!**

**BY DR. CHARLES REINERTSEN**



# The Front Door to Your Body

## The Invasion



According to *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, an infection is an “invasion of bodily tissue by pathogenic microorganisms.” That’s a mouthful! Simply, this definition teaches us that an “infection” is also an “invasion.” That is, before an infection can happen in the eyes, lungs, heart, brain, or any other body part, foreign invaders must somehow enter your body.

“I thought this book was about dental health?” you ask.

It is.

Every time you look in the mirror you are staring at a secret door to your body right there under your nose. Your mouth is more than a pretty smile. Your mouth is the front door to your body—and it’s not just about what you swallow when you eat. The vulnerable spaces in this door can be both subtle and far more dangerous than you realize.

Allow me to share about Alice, Debbie, and Melissa. Their stories illustrate the astonishing, life-changing results you and your loved ones can experience by simply taking good care of the “front door” to your body.

## **Alice**

Alice is an artist, but for two whole years, she had lost her desire to draw or do much of anything she enjoyed. On dialysis for several years, Alice was now bleeding excessively when nurses unhooked her from the dialysis machine. Her medications weren’t working well. She had no energy. The only body part that didn’t seem to experience daily pain was her mouth. At least her mouth was okay, right?

Then, one day, it happened. Alice finally got a toothache. She hadn’t seen a dentist for years because nothing in her mouth had any pain. Her toothache drove her to find a dentist and I was the lucky dentist she found. It’s a good thing, too, because that toothache was about to change, and possibly save, her life.

When I first met Alice, she looked rough. When she opened her mouth, she looked really rough. The bad news was that Alice didn’t just have one infected tooth causing the pain. Her mouth was full of broken teeth and severe gum disease—a *dental disaster*. Think about all that breakage and gum infection like a tattered and rotting front door. With so much damage to her door, there was no telling how many invaders (bacteria) regularly passed through it into her body, nor how much of her suffering could be alleviated by fixing it.

That was the bad news. The good news was that the treatment was straightforward: get the infections under control with antibiotics and remove the bad teeth. By removing the infections and letting the gums heal, we effectively repaired and sealed (closed) the front door to Alice’s bloodstream. After that, all that was left was to watch for improvements in Alice’s health.

Within three weeks of treatment, Alice felt like a new person. Her excess bleeding was eliminated, her medications worked better, and her energy increased. Today, Alice has gone back to drawing and enjoys being alive again. Much of what she had lost is now restored—all by repairing and maintaining the front door to her body. Priceless!

The next story might be even more surprising.

## Debbie

Debbie went to her physician with an abscess on her thigh. The doctor put her on antibiotics. The abscess disappeared for a few weeks and then reappeared. The doctor put her on another round of antibiotics. The abscess again disappeared and again returned a few weeks later. After its third re-appearance, the doctor decided to culture the bacteria to identify it.

The results: dental bacteria.

Debbie hadn't seen a dentist for years because nothing in her mouth hurt. She had no pain, so she had no need to see a dentist, right? Nevertheless, the abscess on Debbie's leg was coming from harmful bacteria in her mouth.

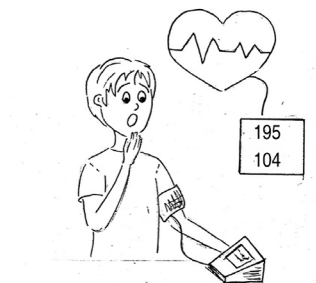
During her first visit, we found three totally pain-free abscessed teeth. Debbie was shocked.

How can infections this severe not hurt? How can so much bone loss take place without any pain? That's the challenge. It's hard to believe, but it's true.

Three weeks after treating her abscessed teeth, Debbie's leg healed all on its own.

You read that right. We treated Debbie's dental abscesses—and her *LEG* healed. It's the other end of the body, yet it was infected by dental bacteria, and it was remedied by restoring her mouth.

Maybe dialysis or a leg abscess seem unlikely to you. How about something more common, like high blood pressure?



Blood pressure checking/ high blood pressure

## **Melissa**

Melissa is a nurse. The only medication she was on was for high blood pressure. Her physician checked her blood pressure. It was high so they gave her pills to lower her blood pressure. Her blood pressure went down. Everything's okay, right?

When she came to see us as a new patient, we did an examination. We found a dental abscess. It didn't have any pain. She felt a little something, but not really any pain.

We took care of her abscess. In this case, we put her on antibiotics and then a few days later removed a hopeless tooth. She came back after about three weeks and said, "Guess what? I don't need my blood pressure medication anymore."

Can a dental infection raise your blood pressure? Absolutely! An infection anywhere in your body can raise your blood pressure. Your body is fighting the infection!

More often than you know, disease-causing bacteria are quietly entering the body and organs through damaged teeth, gums, or other tissues that make up the front door called your mouth and are damaging your body.

## **The River Inside You**

If a factory polluted your drinking water, would you be concerned? ABSOLUTELY! Would you continue drinking it just because it tasted good? I hope not.



So long as you wanted to stay healthy and not poisoned by the factory's pollutants, you'd demand someone clean up that factory, especially if you had children drinking the same water.

We don't have a literal river in our bodies, but we do have a stream. It's called the bloodstream. Your mouth is the factory that can silently dump toxic waste pollutants into your bloodstream. There is no pain. There are no symptoms. You don't even know it's happening—but it is. Just like rivers, the bloodstream can become polluted.

What is the pollution? Let's follow the process.

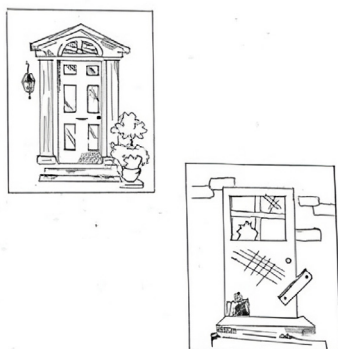
## ***Pus***

Infections in your body produce pus. Anywhere you have an infection, be it from a scraped knee or a cut foot, you might have seen the whitish, creamy, smelly substance that oozes out of the wound—pus. Pus is comprised of harmful bacteria, dead tissue debris, dead white blood cells (WBCs), inflammatory proteins, and some other toxins. When the pus is external, like a pimple on your cheek, you can see it with your naked eye. It's an external infection because it's visible outside of your body. When you pop a pimple, the stuff that oozes out is pus. Because you can see an external infection, it's easy to clean, disinfect, and, if necessary, bandage the open wound.

When it's internal, such as an oral infection hidden behind the curtain of your lips, the pus is formed under your gums or inside the tooth or bone. From there, the pus can either drain into your mouth or into your bloodstream. If it drains into your mouth, you may notice a metallic taste, like sucking on a copper penny. Usually, there is no pain, but there is still destruction. If it drains into your bloodstream, the same is true only you never see or taste it. The pus goes from the infection into blood vessels located in your teeth, gums, and bones. Via those blood vessels, the pus travels past your front door and, thus, begins its journey through your body.



Carried through your bloodstream, this pus brings all of its dead cells and toxic waste through your veins to your heart; from your heart to your lungs; from the lungs back to your heart, which then pumps the infection throughout your entire body. This is the oral-systemic connection. Your mouth affects your whole body!



Imagine your mouth like a beautiful front door. Then, imagine it as a dirty, broken front door instead. How does that make you feel? One of these is true for you, but do you know which one? Ultimately, you won't know until someone skilled takes a thorough look.

## ***Treat the Source, Cure the Problem***

We use our mouth every day for talking, eating, and drinking, but do we ever consider it the possible source behind headaches, persistent coughs, or a stuffy nose? How about cardiovascular disease, heart attacks, strokes, pneumonia, E.D., diabetic and pregnancy complications, Alzheimer's disease, and rheumatoid arthritis?

It's bad enough that most people have no idea when their teeth are abscessed or their gums are infected. Even more devastating is the belief that oral infections only affect the teeth and gums. This is not true. Oral infections can cause or worsen many diseases throughout your entire body.

People frequently treat a medical condition for years without looking for the source. If you never eliminate the cause of the sickness, you will be on treatments for the rest of your life. Regrettably, much of our medical community today is quick to treat symptoms without even so much as looking for the source of the disease. That's the bad news. The good news is that if

you can identify and eliminate the origin of the problem, you can dramatically diminish or even eliminate the diseases, sicknesses, injuries, inflammation, and overall unwellness caused by it—no further treatment required.

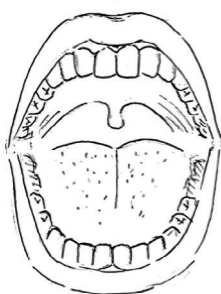
Remember Alice? She was suffering with excessive bleeding, ineffective medications, low energy, and overall depression. What was her treatment? Antibiotics killed her oral infections while tooth extractions removed the source. That is all. Once we cleaned up the factory and sealed it off from her bloodstream, her body could repair and heal itself. *No additional medications were needed.* That is what happens when you successfully identify and eliminate the source—in her case, a factory that was constantly dumping toxins in the river called her bloodstream. Once the factory was sealed off from the stream, she experienced dramatic healing and restoration.

## ***You Don't Know What You Don't Know***

If your teeth or gums don't hurt, they're healthy, right? WRONG!

This is one of the biggest hurdles we face when fighting dental disease. Most people believe that if there is no pain, their mouth is healthy. Usually, it's not.

Part of our challenge is limited visibility. It's dark in there. You have lips, a tongue, teeth, saliva, cheeks, and, to top it all off, a gag reflex. These can make it tough to conduct your dental self-examination. The dentist uses special lights and mirrors, not to mention X-ray machines. Doing that by yourself from home is not possible. If you do pull back your lips and look at your teeth and gums, do you know what you're looking for?



Do you know what you're looking for?



Even your dentist relies on a thorough clinical exam to see that your mouth is healthy. At a minimum, a thorough examination must include multiple radiographs (X-rays) to see beyond the surface. In forty-plus years as a dentist with my own practice, we rarely examined a new patient who wasn't suffering from a symptom-free dental infection. It is a fact that dental infections *usually* have no pain and, yes, *most* of my new patients were already carrying pain-free dental infections ranging from mild gingivitis to severe tooth abscesses with significant bone loss.

What's more, a patient's painless oral condition could be secretly linked to other symptoms that *are* painful such as headaches, lesions, swollen ankles, and joint discomfort. It's hard to believe, but it's true. When you consider that high blood pressure doesn't hurt and neither does diabetes, glaucoma, or cancer until the end stages, it's easier to understand that dental infections don't have to hurt to be damaging your body.

## ***Can Dental Infections Really Be Pain-Free?***

When you consider that neither high blood pressure nor type 2 diabetes cause pain, or that glaucoma or cancer can go virtually symptom-free until the end stages, does it become easier to accept that dental infections don't have to hurt to be damaging or even life-threatening?

Like so many, Alice saw physicians on a regular basis for years; yet, none of them picked up on her dental disease. Often, the source of a medical problem isn't really hidden. We're just not looking in the right place. Physicians weren't trained to examine your mouth. Most still seem to believe the mouth is only of concern to dentists despite the effect oral health has on the systems and organs of the body. Debbie, Alice, and Melissa had health problems outside of their mouths, yet the mouth was the source.

So, what do you think? Maybe we shouldn't consider our yearly check-up complete until we've thoroughly assessed the health of the mouth. Before assuming we have all the information to determine the source of a disease, we might do well to call in the dentist. You don't have to wait for your physician to ask. In fact, you probably shouldn't. As we'll unpack in the next chapter, waiting for your physician to ask for a dentist's oral report could leave you waiting a long, long time.

You'll need to see a professional dentist at some point, I'll show you how to get started at home, on your own, for less than two tickets to a movie theater (and maybe less than the popcorn). I've helped a lot of people rebuild and maintain a beautiful, strong, secure front door to their body

and, through this book, I am grateful for the privilege and opportunity to show you how also.

### ***Let's review what we've learned so far:***

1. The mouth is the front door to the body. Most bacteria enter the body through the front door. These bacteria cause or affect many medical problems: cardiovascular disease, heart attacks, strokes, E.D., diabetic and pregnancy complications, pneumonia, Alzheimer's disease, and rheumatoid arthritis. Lack of pain does not mean the mouth is healthy.