



**PERI  
EDU**

# **HOW TO PROTECT YOUR DENTAL IMPLANT?**

**A patient guide to peri-implantitis,  
warning signs and regular check-up**

**INTEGRATING PERI-IMPLANTITIS  
RESEARCH INTO HIGHER EDUCATION  
CURRICULUM**



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

**WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL**

# INTRODUCTION

A dental implant can serve you for many years. It can restore chewing, improve comfort and help rebuild your smile. **But an implant is not something you can simply forget about after treatment.**

An implant cannot get tooth decay, but the gum and bone around it can still become inflamed. This inflammation may develop quietly, without pain at the beginning. You may feel that everything is fine, while the tissues around the implant already need attention.

This short guide explains what peri-implantitis is, why regular check-ups matter, which symptoms should not be ignored and how your general health may influence the tissues around implants.

It is not a medical diagnosis or a replacement for a dental visit. Its purpose is to help you understand when to react and how to protect your implant in everyday life.

**The key message is simple:**  
**the best way to protect an implant is daily care, regular check-ups and early reaction to warning signs.**



# CHAPTER 1

## WHAT IS PERI- IMPLANTITIS?

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

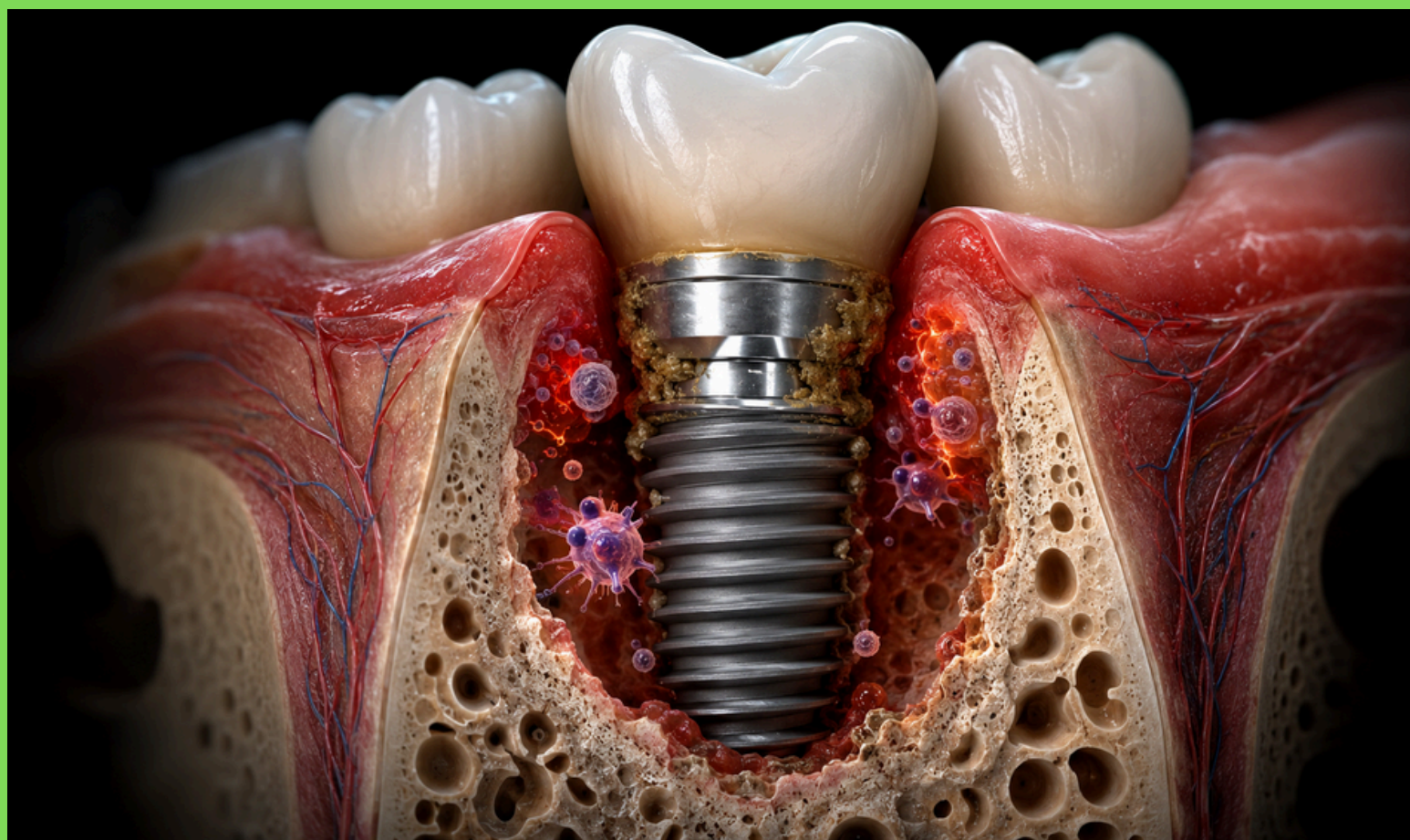
# WHAT IS PERI-IMPLANTITIS?

Peri-implantitis is inflammation of the tissues around a dental implant. It may affect the gum and, in more advanced cases, the bone that supports the implant.

At the beginning, inflammation may involve only the gum around the implant. This early stage is called peri-implant mucositis. It may cause bleeding, redness, swelling or tenderness. At this point, the bone is not yet damaged and the problem can often be controlled.

The situation becomes more serious when inflammation reaches the bone. This is called peri-implantitis. Bone is very important because it keeps the implant stable. If bone loss progresses, the implant may lose support.

The difficult part is that peri-implantitis may not hurt at first. You may not notice anything unusual, even when inflammation is already developing.





An implant cannot get tooth decay, but the gum and bone around it can become diseased.

-

**PATIENT TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)



# CHAPTER 2

## WHY DOES BIOFILM MATTER?

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

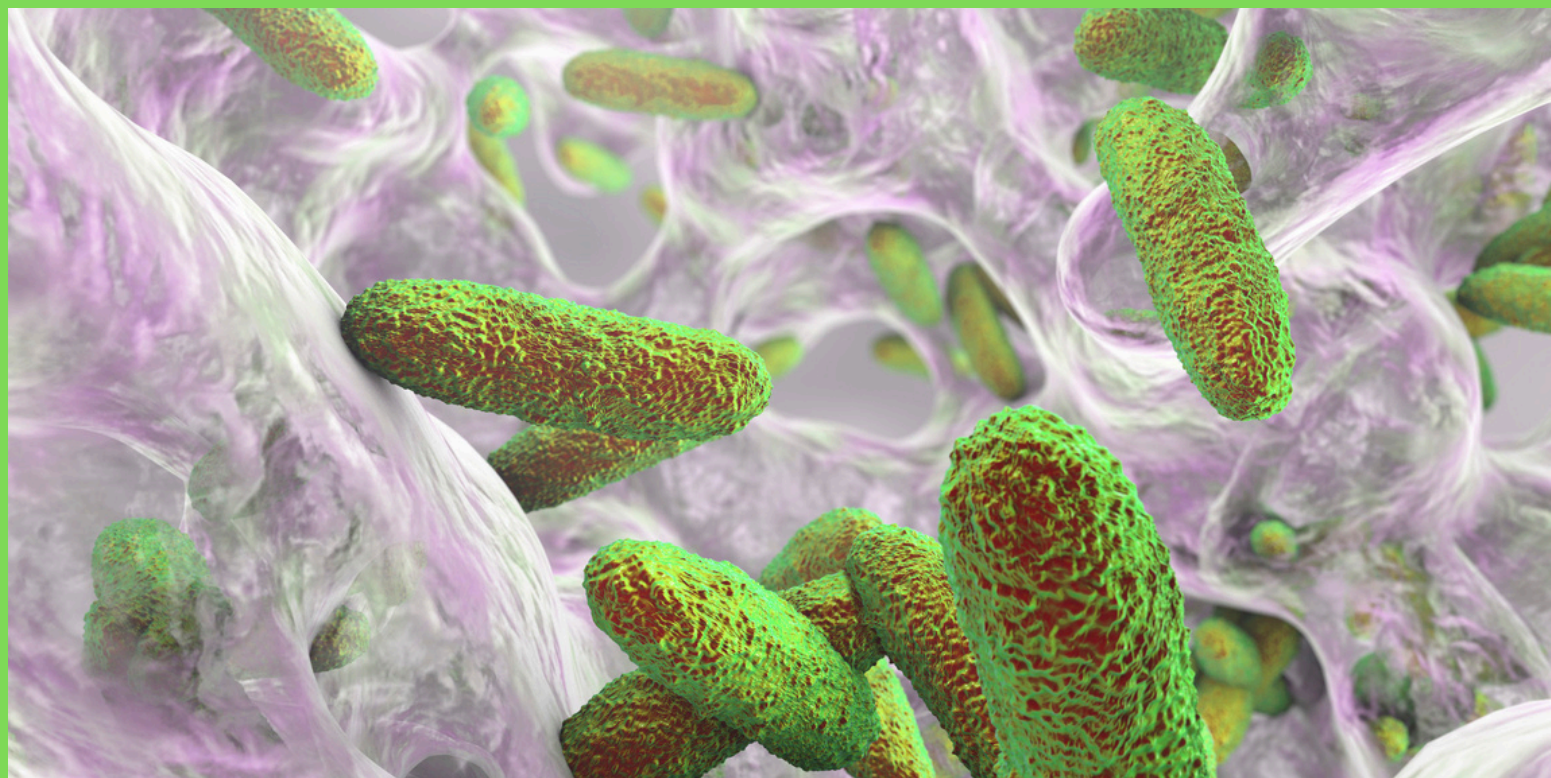
# WHY DOES BIOFILM MATTER?

Biofilm is a thin layer of bacteria that can collect around teeth, implants, crowns, bridges and other dental restorations.

You may not see biofilm with the naked eye, but your gum can react to it with inflammation. Around implants, bacteria often collect in places that are difficult to clean: near the gumline, under a crown, around a bridge or between the implant and neighboring teeth.

This is why quick brushing is often not enough. An implant may need special cleaning tools, such as interdental brushes, implant floss or a water flosser. Your dentist or dental hygienist can show you which tools are best for your implant.

Professional hygiene visits are also important. Some deposits cannot be removed properly at home. Regular cleaning in the dental office helps reduce bacteria and protect the tissues around the implant.





You may not see biofilm, but  
your gum can react to it with  
inflammation.

-  
**PATIENT TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)



# 3 CHAPTER

**BLEEDING IS A  
WARNING SIGN**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

# BLEEDING IS A WARNING SIGN

Bleeding around an implant should not be treated as normal.

It may appear when brushing, flossing, using an interdental brush or during a dental check-up. It does not always mean a serious disease, but it is a signal that the tissues around the implant should be checked.

A common mistake is to stop cleaning the area because it bleeds. In many cases, this can make the problem worse. If bacteria and deposits are causing inflammation, avoiding the area may allow more biofilm to build up.

Do not panic, but do not ignore bleeding. Ask your dentist or dental hygienist to check the implant and show you how to clean the area safely and effectively.

The earlier inflammation is noticed, the easier it may be to control.





Bleeding around an implant  
is not normal — it is a reason  
for a check-up.

-  
**CLINICAL TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)



# CHAPTER

# WHY REGULAR CHECK-UPS MATTER

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

# WHY REGULAR CHECK-UPS MATTER

An implant may not hurt even when inflammation is developing. This is why regular check-ups are so important.

During a visit, your dentist or dental hygienist checks the gum around the implant, bleeding, swelling, pocket depth, discharge, your ability to clean the area and the condition of the crown, bridge or prosthetic restoration.

Sometimes an X-ray is needed to check whether the bone level around the implant is stable.

A check-up is not only about finding problems. It is also about prevention. Your dental team can help you improve your cleaning technique, choose better hygiene tools and detect early signs before they become more difficult to treat.

With implants, waiting for pain is not a safe strategy. Monitoring is part of long-term care.





No pain does not always  
mean that everything is fine.  
Regular check-ups help  
protect your implant.

-

**PATIENT TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)



# 5 CHAPTER

**WHO HAS A HIGHER  
RISK?**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

# WHO HAS A HIGHER RISK?

Peri-implantitis can develop in different people, but some patients have a higher risk.

Risk may be higher if you smoke, have diabetes, had gum disease in the past, find it difficult to clean around the implant, miss regular check-ups or have a restoration that is difficult to maintain.

Previous gum disease is especially important. If you lost teeth because of gum problems, bleeding gums or loose teeth, your implants also need careful monitoring.

Smoking may weaken healing and reduce blood supply to the tissues. Diabetes, especially if poorly controlled, may make healing more difficult and increase susceptibility to inflammation.

The goal is not to be afraid. The goal is to know your risk and act early.





The risk of peri-implantitis is not the same for everyone. Knowing your risk helps protect your implant.

-

**PATIENT TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)



# CHAPTER 6

## DIABETES AND GENERAL HEALTH

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

# DIABETES AND GENERAL HEALTH

Your implant is in your mouth, but it functions in your whole body.

General health may influence healing, inflammation and the condition of the gum and bone around the implant. Diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity, metabolic syndrome, osteoporosis, autoimmune diseases and some medications may all matter.

This does not mean that every person with a chronic disease will have implant problems. It means that dental care should be planned more carefully.

If you have diabetes, blood sugar control is especially important. High blood sugar may make healing more difficult and may increase the risk of inflammation.

Always tell your dentist about chronic diseases, medications and changes in your health. These details help your dental team assess risk and plan the best care for your implant.





**General health can influence  
the tissues around implants.  
Tell your dentist about  
diseases, medications and  
test results.**

-  
**PATIENT TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)



# 7

CHAPTER

## CAN BLOOD TESTS HELP?

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

# CAN BLOOD TESTS HELP?

Blood tests do not diagnose peri-implantitis on their own. They do not replace examination of the implant, gum, bone or X-rays. The most important assessment still happens in the dental office.

However, blood tests may sometimes help your clinician understand your general health. They may show signs of inflammation, diabetes control, metabolic problems, deficiencies or other conditions that can influence healing.

For example, results such as blood glucose, HbA1c, CRP or white blood cell count may provide additional information. But they must always be interpreted together with symptoms, dental examination, medical history and imaging.

Do not try to diagnose implant problems from blood tests alone. Treat them as one part of a broader health picture.





Blood tests may add information about your general health, but they do not replace an implant check-up.

-  
**PATIENT TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)



# 8

CHAPTER

**WHEN SHOULD YOU  
SEE A DENTIST?**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

# WHEN SHOULD YOU SEE A DENTIST?

Book a check-up if you notice any change around your implant.

Do not wait until the implant hurts or moves. Early signs may be small, but they are important.

You should see a dentist if you notice:

- bleeding when brushing or cleaning,
- swelling or redness,
- tenderness around the implant,
- unpleasant smell or taste,
- discharge,
- pain or discomfort,
- difficulty cleaning the area,
- a change in the shape of the gum,
- a feeling that the implant area is different than before.
- 

You should also schedule a visit if you have not had an implant check-up for a long time, even if you do not have symptoms.





Small signs are easier to  
treat early. Do not wait for  
pain.

-  
**PATIENT TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)



# 9

CHAPTER

## HOW TO PROTECT YOUR IMPLANT

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

# HOW TO PROTECT YOUR IMPLANT

Protecting your implant is based on everyday habits and regular professional care.

Clean the implant every day. Use the tools recommended for your restoration, not only a regular toothbrush if more is needed.

Do not ignore bleeding. It is better to check a small sign early than to wait until the problem becomes advanced.

Attend regular check-ups and professional hygiene visits. Your dental team can remove deposits from places that are difficult to clean at home.

Tell your dentist about diabetes, smoking, chronic diseases, medications and recent test results. Your general health may influence how tissues around the implant heal and react.

If you are not sure how to clean your implant, ask for instructions. Good hygiene is a skill, and it can be improved.





The best protection is simple: daily cleaning, regular check-ups and early reaction to warning signs.

-

**PATIENT TAKEAWAY**

[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)

# PATIENT CHECKLIST

## DO YOU NEED AN IMPLANT CHECK-UP?

### Book a visit if:

- your implant bleeds during brushing or cleaning,
- the gum is swollen or red,
- you notice an unpleasant smell or taste,
- there is discharge around the implant,
- cleaning the area is difficult,
- the gum has changed shape,
- you feel discomfort or pain,
- the implant feels different than before,
- you smoke,
- you have diabetes or another chronic disease,
- you have not had a check-up for a long time.

**If you are not sure whether something is normal, it is safer to ask.**

# SUMMARY

A dental implant can be a long-term solution, but it needs care.

It does not get tooth decay, but the gum and bone around it can become inflamed. The first signs may be small: bleeding, swelling, unpleasant smell or difficulty cleaning. Sometimes there is no pain at the beginning.

Peri-implantitis is easier to manage when it is detected early. That is why regular check-ups, professional hygiene and good daily cleaning are essential.

Your general health also matters. Diabetes, smoking, chronic diseases and medications can influence healing and inflammation. Informing your dentist about your health helps protect your implant better.

**The most important message is clear:  
do not wait for pain. Protect your implant before a  
small problem becomes a serious one.**





## **EDUCATIONAL NOTE**

This material is educational in nature and does not replace individual diagnosis, professional dental examination or treatment planning.

If you notice bleeding, swelling, pain, discharge, unpleasant smell or any change around your implant, contact your dentist or dental hygienist.

Blood tests, inflammatory markers and general health information may support clinical assessment, but they do not replace dental examination, imaging or professional diagnosis.



# FROM RESEARCH TO EDUCATION

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author or authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the National Agency for the Erasmus+ Programme. Neither the European Union nor the National Agency can be held responsible for them.



**INTEGRATING PERI-IMPLANTITIS RESEARCH INTO  
HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM**



[WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL](http://WWW.PERI-EDU.UMW.EDU.PL)