Can dental health affect general health?

The mouth and the face reflect signs and symptoms of health and disease. Oral fluids and tissues (buccal cells) are increasingly being used to diagnose a wide range of health conditions.

Recent studies reveal possible associations between oral infections, particularly periodontal (gum) disease, and diabetes, stroke, cardiovascular disease, and adverse pregnancy outcomes. The mouth contains many bacteria. While most of these are harmless and even beneficial to the digestion of food and oral health, there are others in the mix which can cause disease. Unhealthy bacteria feed on the sugars and starches that we eat. Without proper oral hygiene, these can reach levels that might lead to gum disease and severe inflammation.

The good news is that bacteria in the mouth can be controlled with good oral care. Here are some tips to protect your oral health:

- Brush after meals (at least twice a day) and floss at least once a day to remove food, the source of harmful bacteria
- Avoid sugary and starchy foods, especially when you don’t have access to a toothbrush, to help constrain bacterial growth
- Replace your toothbrush every three to four months or sooner if bristles are frayed
- Visit your dentist twice a year for check-ups and cleaning.

Sources

http://www.mayoclinic.org, my.clevelandclinic.organd.nih.gov
Shin Splints: Definition and treatment

‘Shin splints’ is a catch-all term for leg pain that occurs below the knee, on either the front outside or the inside part of the leg. It is a nuisance for many runners, tennis players, dancers and other active people. The condition often plagues beginning runners who do not build their mileage gradually enough, or seasoned runners who abruptly change their workout regimen, suddenly adding too much mileage, or switching from running on flat surfaces to hills. Shin splints can generally be described in four words: “Too much, too soon.”

What is a shin splint? There is no consensus among sports scientists, and theories have included small tears in the muscle that is pulled off the bone, an inflammation of the periosteum (a thin sheath of tissue that wraps around the tibia or shin bone), an inflammation of the muscle, or some combination of these. Fortunately, experts agree on treatment.

Common causes of shin splints

- Over pronation (a frequent cause of medial shin splints)
- Inadequate stretching
- Worn shoes
- Excessive stress placed on one leg or one hip from running on cambered roads
- Always running in the same direction on a track

Treatment of shin splints

- Stop running completely or decrease your training, then, as a first step, ice your shin to reduce inflammation
- Stretch your calves
- Use leg wraps to prevent stress on the shin
- Consider cross-training for a while, to let your shin heal
- When you return to running, increase your mileage slowly
- Make sure you wear the correct running shoes for your foot type
- Avoid hills and excessively hard surfaces until shin pain goes away completely, then re-introduce them gradually, to prevent a recurrence
- If you are prone to developing shin splints, stretch your calves and Achilles tendon regularly, as a preventive measure.

http://www.runnersworld.com/tag/shin-splints