

## Are My Cat's Dental Problems Related to Diabetes?

**CatChannel veterinary expert Arnold Plotnick, DVM, says diabetic cats are more susceptible to infections of all kinds.**

*By Arnold Plotnick, DVM*

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**Q:** I have a 12-year-old cat that is a diabetic. He lost his right top fang today and I noticed that the bottom right fang is already missing. I see him at the food bowl so I know he is eating. Is this something to do with his illness or is this another problem?

**A:** The loss of his fangs is probably due to periodontal disease, which is common in cats. The fact that he is diabetic is a complicating factor. Diabetics tend to have weaker immune systems than nondiabetic cats, and are more susceptible to infection, including oral infections. Simple periodontal disease can progress to bigger problems, such as a tooth-root abscess, if undiagnosed and untreated. Infections in diabetic cats can affect the control of their diabetes, sometimes seriously. Your cat may be eating well despite his periodontal disease, but I would have him examined anyway. Your veterinarian might want to take a dental X-ray to see that there are no retained roots in there, as these can be painful and could lead to infection down the road.