

# ORAL HEALTH

## **What is gum disease?**

Gum disease is a term used to describe a variety of oral conditions from gum inflammation to reduced jaw bone and tooth loss.

### **Symptoms of gum disease-**

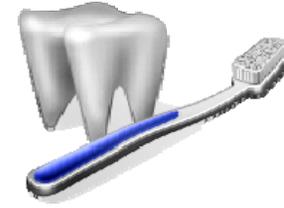
- Persistent bad breath
- Red or swollen gums
- Tender or bleeding gums
- Painful chewing
- Loose or missing teeth
- Receding gum-line
- Sensitive teeth

## **What causes gum disease?**

Our mouths are actually full of bacteria that begin the digestive process and are responsible for tooth decay, bad breath, and that sticky, fuzzy feeling on your teeth before you brush.

Dentists call this coating bacterial plaque or Biofilm. Regular brushing and flossing help remove plaque. Plaque that is not removed can harden and calcify into tarter or calculus. Only a professional cleaning by a dentist or dental hygienist can remove tarter.

Leaving plaque and tarter in your mouth can lead to gum disease or periodontitis. In periodontitis, the gums can become inflamed and pull away from the teeth allowing “pockets” of infection to form. This can lead to the breakdown of the bone and tissue that hold the teeth allowing the teeth to become painful and loose.



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*“...and his countenance was as the sun shining in his strength” Revelations 1:16*

**What can I do to PREVENT gum disease?**

1. Brush your teeth for 2 minutes twice a day
2. Floss your teeth everyday
3. Eat a well-balanced diet with lots of vegetables
4. Visit your dentist at least twice a year for a check-up and professional cleaning
5. Have your brushing and flossing technique checked by your dental professional
6. Don't use tobacco products
7. Limit sweets and drink lots of water

**Gum disease can be a factor in other health problems including:**

- Difficulty controlling blood sugar levels in diabetics
- An increased risk of arteriosclerosis due to chronic increased inflammation
- An increased risk of heart attack or stroke
- Pre-term delivery during pregnancy
- Low birth weight babies

*3 of 4 adults will have some form of gum disease in their life-time*



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