

Gum Disease

Causes, Treatment, and Prevention

WHAT IS GUM DISEASE?

Gum disease is an infection of the tissues that surround and support your teeth.

There are two types of gum disease: gingivitis and periodontitis.

GINGIVITIS

- Earliest stage and mildest form of gum disease
- Reversible with proper hygiene and dental care
- Red, swollen, bleeding gums

VS

PERIODONTITIS

- Advanced form of gum disease due to untreated gingivitis
- Irreversible, but treatable with professional dental care
- Deep gum pockets with tissue and bone loss

COMMON SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

RED OR BLEEDING GUMS

RECEDING, TENDER, OR SWOLLEN GUMS

BAD BREATH

LOOSE TEETH

Mouth-Body Connection

47.2 percent, or 64.7 million American adults have some form of gum disease

Gum disease is higher in men than women (56.4 percent vs. 38.4 percent)

Diabetics are 2X - 4X more likely to have gum disease

People with gum disease are 2X as likely to develop heart disease

Gum disease has been linked to strokes, alzheimers, osteoporosis, COPD and cancer

What Are the Primary Causes of Gum Disease?

Plaque Buildup (Bacterial Imbalance)



When there is an excessive amount of dental plaque on your teeth and the bad (pathogenic) bacteria outnumber the good bacteria, you become more susceptible to gum disease. Systemically, when you have underlying conditions like diabetes, you may also suffer from an oral imbalance by suppressing your overall immune response, leading to worsening gum disease.

Smoking & Chewing Tobacco



Smoking and chewing tobacco interferes with the normal function of gum tissue cells, making your mouth more vulnerable to infections like gum disease. People who smoke are more likely to produce bacterial plaque. Smoking causes a lack of oxygen in the bloodstream, so the infected gums don't heal.

Poor Diet



A poor diet is linked to nutritional deficiencies that can lead to gum disease. A diet high in sugar and carbohydrates while low in water and vitamin C is a primary cause for gum disease. Make sure you drink lots of water along with a well balanced diet filled with green and leafy vegetables.

Poor Oral Hygiene



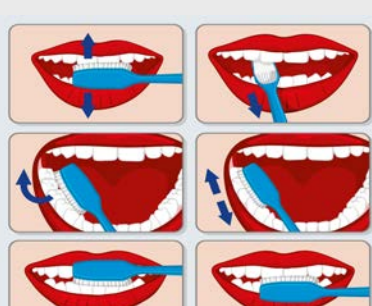
Practicing an effective brushing and flossing routine along with the correct type of products is essential to controlling gum disease. Mechanically removing plaque with a soft bristle toothbrush and floss is important to prevent and heal gum disease. Remember to not only brush & floss 2X per day but also focus on your brushing techniques to effectively remove plaque.

Prescription Medications



Some medications might have side effects that reduce saliva production and flow, which can leave you with a dry mouth, encouraging bacteria to spread more readily which can lead to gum disease. In addition to prescribed and over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, minerals, and herbal supplements can also cause oral health issues that range from dry mouth to inflamed gums to taste alterations and bone loss.

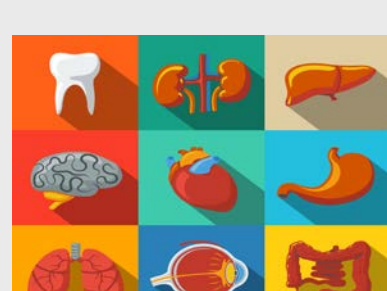
Treatment & Prevention



Brush and Floss 2X per day



Dental cleanings 2X per year to remove plaque/tartr build-up



Address any systemic health conditions or habits (diabetes, smoking, etc.)



Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet



Take dietary supplements like Coenzyme Q10, Vitamin C, Vitamin D



Use prescription strength mouthwash from your dentist (Chlorhexidine)



Laser Surgery (LANAP), tissue grafting, or professional deep cleaning for advanced gum disease



Splints or bite-guards stabilize loose teeth

Recommendations & Advice

Preventing and healing gum disease is a whole-body approach. If you can address the primary risk factors discussed above, you will have a significant advantage over being a susceptible to gum disease. It is important that you visit your dental team regularly for a normal check-up and a full mouth examination so that any other conditions can be spotted early.

Remember to always practice conscious oral health awareness and refer to the symptoms above that may be a sign of the beginning of gum disease.

Treat the mouth as part of a complex system with no one approach to defeating gum disease. Appreciating and understanding how your mouth interacts with the other systems in your body will enable you to effectively treat and prevent gum disease for a lifetime.