

Gum Disease & Treatment



If your gums are tender or bleeding, chances are, you have gum disease!

- An infectious disease that starts between your tooth and your gum
- Bacteria live there, and when too many move in, they form plaque
- Plaque and tartar (hard build-up along the gum line) irritate your gums, which swell and bleed
- Serious gum disease is called periodontitis
- Severe periodontitis damages your gums, your teeth, even your jaw
- Your teeth can fall out and your overall health can deteriorate

What causes gum disease?

- Not flossing and brushing every day
- Dry mouth (saliva washes away bacteria)
- Candy, soda, foods with too much sugar
- Using tobacco in any form
- Changes in the body during pregnancy
- A history of gum disease in your family increases your chances of getting it
- Diabetics get more infections (like gum disease)

Healthy Gums

- When your gums are healthy, they're pink and firm

Gingivitis

- Your gums are tender, reddish, and may bleed when you brush

Periodontitis - Early/Moderate Periodontitis

- Your gums start to pull away from your teeth, leaving a gap or pocket
- Harmful bacteria build up, gums get more irritated, infected and may bleed
- Your teeth get more sensitive because more root is exposed

Periodontitis - Advanced Periodontitis

- Bacteria spread, you lose gum tissue and bone that support the teeth
- Gums pull farther away, pockets get deeper
- Your teeth get loose, shift and can fall out

Professional treatment plus better brushing and flossing may be able to reverse some damage caused by Periodontitis. Catching it early and taking action is the best way to stop it.

Fight gum disease with proper care.

- Learn to remove plaque by brushing properly without damaging enamel
- Your Dental Professional may recommend using:
 - a power toothbrush
 - a prescription toothpaste
 - a prescription oral rinse
- Floss every day to remove plaque between teeth
- Don't miss appointments with your Dental Professional

You may also need professional treatments to fight advanced stages of gum disease.

- **Scaling and root planing** - removing calculus and tartar below the gum line
- **Prescription medicines** - antimicrobials placed directly at the site of the infection
- **Flap surgery** - gums are cut open to remove the infection
- **Bone grafting** - artificial bone is used to replace natural bone
- **Implant surgery** - porcelain or ceramic teeth are cemented onto metal rods that are inserted into your jaw

If you want to keep your teeth, take care of your gums.



Dental professionals can spot early signs of problems and recommend home care treatments, if you visit regularly!



Healthy Gums



Firm, pink gums support your teeth and protect the roots

Gingivitis



Swollen, red gums are tender and bleed

Early/Moderate Periodontitis



Bacteria start to destroy gum tissue and bone

Advanced Periodontitis



Bacteria cause permanent damage and tooth loss

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