

Periodontal Disease

The word periodontal literally means "around the tooth." Periodontal disease is a chronic bacterial infection that affects the gums and bone supporting the teeth. Periodontal diseases (gum diseases), including gingivitis and periodontitis, are serious infections that will lead to tooth loss and other problems if left untreated.

Signs of periodontal disease:

- Gums that bleed when brushing
- Red, swollen, or tender gums
- Persistent bad breath or bad taste
- Formation of deep pockets between the teeth and gums
- Receding gums
- Loose or shifting teeth
- Changes in the way your teeth fit together

While plaque and tartar are the primary causes of periodontal disease, there are many other contributing factors, including:

- Tobacco use, Hormonal changes, Medications, Poor nutrition
- Illnesses, Clenching and grinding of teeth
- Heredity, Diabetes

Periodontal disease is never resolved; it has to be managed after treatment. Plaque and bacteria build up faster if you have periodontal disease. Therefore, if periodontal disease is present, it needs to be treated and then maintained by visiting the dentist 3-4 times a year in order to keep the plaque and inflammation under control. Good home care is extremely important in controlling this disease. Using our products and techniques will keep periodontal disease under control.

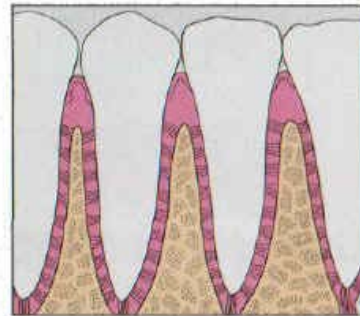
There are many different **stages of periodontal disease**. After a thorough exam and evaluation, an appropriate course of treatment will be given. Below on the left is an example of gum disease with tartar on the root surface. Notice the gums are red and infected. On the right is what the teeth and gum tissues look like after treatment. Please note that the gums after treatment are a healthy pink shade and the root surface is smooth and tartar-free.



Periodontal disease is associated with many health problems such as heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease, diabetes, and pregnancy complications. Bacteria in the mouth can be carried through out the body. If not regularly removed, this bacteria can significantly increase the risk of heart attack and stroke.

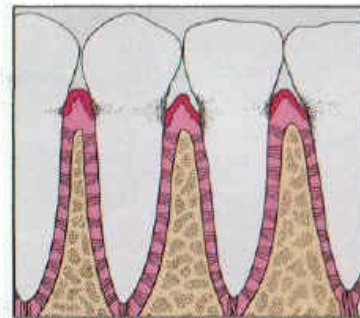
1. Normal, Healthy Gingiva (Gums)

Healthy gums and bone anchor teeth firmly in place.



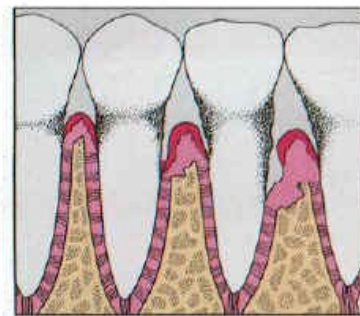
2. Gingivitis

Plaque and its byproducts irritate the gums, making them tender, inflamed, and likely to bleed.



3. Periodontitis

Unremoved, plaque hardens into calculus (tartar). As plaque and calculus continue to build up, the gums begin to recede (pull away) from the teeth, and pockets form between the teeth and gums.



4. Advanced Periodontitis

The gums recede farther, destroying more bone and the periodontal ligament. Teeth—even healthy teeth—may become loose and need to be extracted.

