



Periodontal (Gum) Disease

Periodontal disease, or gum disease, is a leading factor in tooth loss and is also associated with other chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. The main cause of periodontal disease is harmful bacteria found in the plaque that accumulates on teeth. The disease can range from a mild stage, known as gingivitis, to a more severe stage, known as periodontitis. Prevention, and in some cases reversal, of the disease is possible by maintaining good oral health habits and visiting the dentist regularly for checkups and cleanings.

According to the American Dental Association, the following risk factors contribute to the development of periodontal disease, and the following warning signs may help identify the condition:

Risk Factors:

- Tobacco (smoking or smokeless)
- Systemic diseases like diabetes
- Medications like steroids, specific types of anti-epilepsy drugs, cancer therapy drugs and some calcium channel blockers
- Poor fitting bridges
- Crooked teeth
- Defective fillings
- Pregnancy or oral contraceptives
- Genetic predisposition to gum disease



Warning signs:

- Bleeding gums
- Red, swollen or tender gums
- Receding gums
- Constant bad breath or bad tastes in your mouth
- Loose or separating permanent teeth
- Changes to your bite and pain while chewing
- Poor fitting dentures

You can have periodontal disease without any symptoms or warning signs, which is why visiting the dentist regularly is important to detecting and treating the disease. At your regular dental visit, your dentist will examine your teeth and gums for periodontal disease and discuss your risk based on your oral and overall health history. If you are diagnosed with gum disease, your dentist can go over your treatment options, which will differ based on the type of periodontal disease you have and its progression.

Maintaining good oral health is key to preventing and successfully treating periodontal disease. Brushing twice a day, flossing daily and scheduling regular dental visits can contribute to your overall health as well as keep your smile healthy. Visit your dentist as soon as possible, especially if you experience swelling.

Visit **truassure.com** for more oral health resources and information.