

GUM DISEASE



Did you know?

Severe gum disease has been linked to other health conditions such as heart and respiratory diseases, stroke and diabetes.

WHAT IS GUM DISEASE?

Also known as periodontal disease, gum disease is an inflammatory condition that affects the gums and supporting tissues. It develops when bacteria in dental plaque trigger inflammation around the teeth and gums. If left untreated, it can progress and damage the tissues and bone that support the teeth.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS

Gum disease may not always cause pain. Signs to look out for include:

- ➔ Red, swollen or tender gums.
- ➔ Gums that bleed easily, especially when brushing or cleaning between your teeth.
- ➔ Persistent bad breath.
- ➔ Gums pulling away from the teeth.
- ➔ Pus between the teeth and gums.
- ➔ Loose teeth or teeth moving apart.
- ➔ Changes in the way your teeth fit together when you bite.
- ➔ Changes in the way your dentures fit.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Gum disease is largely preventable.



Brush for 2 minutes, 2x a day with fluoride toothpaste to remove food and plaque.



Clean between your teeth daily. Use floss or interdental brushes to remove plaque from areas your toothbrush cannot reach.



Limit free sugars. Frequent sugar intake increases your risk of gum disease.



Avoid tobacco use. Tobacco can increase the risk and severity of gum disease.



Limit alcohol consumption. Drinking alcohol in excess can have long-term effects on your teeth and gums.



Visit your dental team regularly. They can detect early signs of gum disease and prevent it from progressing.

WHY EARLY ACTION MATTERS

If gum disease progresses, damage to the tissues and bone supporting the teeth cannot be reversed and may ultimately lead to tooth loss, making it harder to eat and speak and reducing quality of life. Gum disease can also affect the rest of the body: bacteria and inflammation associated with the disease can have consequences for overall health and well-being. Gum disease can often be successfully treated if detected early.

WHERE TO GO NEXT

Read **The mouth-body connection** fact sheet to learn more about how good oral health contributes to your overall health, well-being and quality of life.



World Oral
Health Day
20 March



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EVERYWHERE
IS INVITED
TO JOIN US

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