

Advice for Prevention

- Brush teeth twice daily with either a compact manual brush or a powered toothbrush
- Use a toothpaste containing Triclosan eg: Colgate Total
- DO NOT SMOKE
- Clean interdentally with interdental brushes or Floss
- Follow a healthy diet.



CASTLE DENTAL CARE
We'll take care of you

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Opening Hours

Monday	9.00 am -5.30 pm
Tuesday	9.00 am - 5.30pm
Wednesday	8.30 am - 5.00pm
Thursday	8.30 am - 5.00pm
Friday	8.30 am - 4.30 pm

Wheelchair access available



Leaflet Revised 24/6/10

Tell me about.....

Gum Disease



What is meant by gum disease?

Gum disease is a collective term for gingivitis and Periodontitis (Pyorrhoea). It is a disease which attacks the gum tissues and the bone, both of which hold the teeth in place.

What is gingivitis?

This is the first stage of the disease, when just the soft tissues of the gum are affected.

What is periodontitis?

This is the later stage of gum disease when the bone supporting the teeth under the gum is attacked as well.

Am I likely to suffer from gum disease?

Most of the population suffer from gum disease. It is the main cause of tooth loss.

What is the cause?

The cause is a sticky film of bacteria called "Plaque" which forms on the surface of the teeth. These bacteria attack where the gum and teeth meet. The gum becomes red and swollen and a space (called a pocket) forms between the gum and teeth. This pocket then fills up with plaque. The fibres, which hold the teeth to the bone, and the bone itself are then attacked and the pocket deepens.

What is the eventual result of gum disease?

If untreated, enough bone is lost for the teeth to loosen considerably and they may come out or have to be taken out. The disease is usually slow in progressing and it can take a number of years for this to occur. However, treatment of the disease becomes increasingly more difficult as it progresses.

Do I have gum disease?

Probably yes, to some extent, unless you are already carrying out near perfect cleaning and have been found to be free of the disease by your dentist.

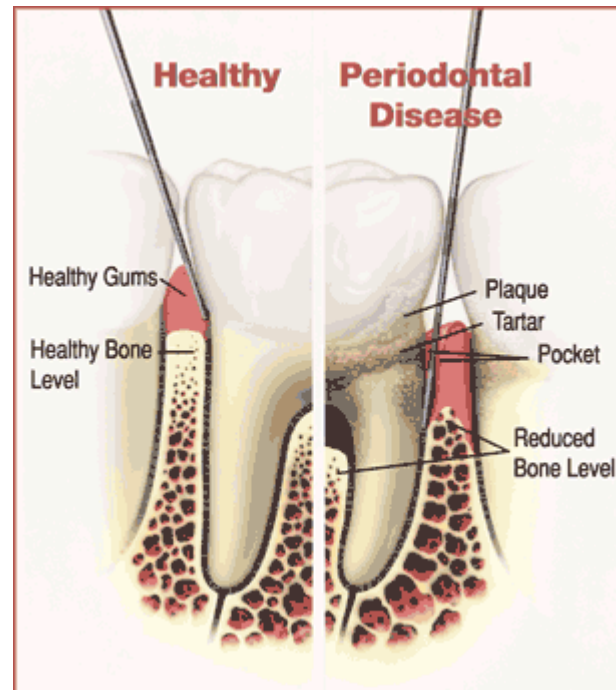
So what do I do about it?

First visit your dentist to find out the state of your gums. Treatment by your dentist or hygienist may be required initially, for example; thorough professional cleaning of your teeth, even some possible work directly or beneath your gums.

From then on the maintenance of healthy gums is the same as prevention of the disease in the first place. This means thorough daily cleaning of the teeth to remove all plaque from the surfaces of the teeth. This usually requires the efficient use of the correct sort of toothbrush (which your dentist or hygienist will advise you about), Fluoride toothpaste and some sort of aid to clean in between the teeth where a considerable amount of harmful plaque forms. For this purpose either dental floss or tape or the use of specially designed interdental brushes should be used and their correct use demonstrated to you.

Does anything make gum disease worse?

Yes. Smoking, poor fillings and dentures and incorrect biting forces on teeth can make the gum disease progress faster. Certain illnesses can reduce the resistance of the gums to disease and pregnant women are more susceptible. It must be stressed that in these cases the presence of plaque is still necessary for there to be gum disease.



Is Gum Disease Painful?

Not necessarily. It can progress for many years without there ever being any pain, but in some cases the infection, instead of being slow and chronic, can become acute. The gingivitis becomes painful with the formation of ulcers on the gums and a bad smell and taste in the mouth. At this stage the gum destruction is rapid. In the later stages, abscesses may form with resultant pain and swelling.

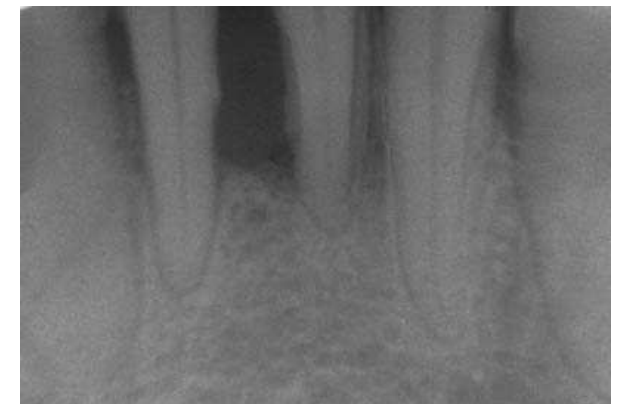
My gums bleed - What does this mean?

Quite simply, it means you have gum disease. It is not normal for gums to bleed either spontaneously, or on eating or brushing. Healthy gums **do not** bleed.

Well then what must I do?

Don't be complacent. If your gums bleed or appear red and inflamed, ask your dentist or hygienist to examine your gums. The earlier this is done the more likely you are to avoid problems.

It is approximately from the age of 35 that more teeth are lost through gum disease than for any other reason. Gum disease is completely preventable and in the early stages curable. There is no reason why this should happen to you. With sufficient effort you can avoid gum disease



X-ray showing Advanced gum disease