

Introduction Periodontal Disease

- Chronic bacterial infection in the mouth
- Can occur at any age but is prevalent in older adults
- Usually starts with gingivitis; red and slightly swollen gums caused by accumulation of plaque on the tooth if let untreated, gingivitis may progress to "periodontitis"

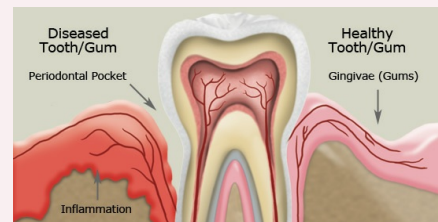
Symptoms of Periodontitis

- tender, bleeding gums
- painful chewing
- chronic bad breath
- teeth that are sensitive to cold/heat
- change in fit or comfort of partial dentures
- receding gums
- untreated periodontitis may lead to destruction of gums and tissues that support teeth
- teeth may become loose and if untreated tooth extraction may be required
- Impact on physical health
- gums pull away from the teeth and form pockets that become infected
- immune system fights the bacteria as plaque spreads and expands below gum line
- bacteria toxins and immune system response may break down bone and connective tissue
- evidence of relationship between cardiovascular disease and poor oral health
- oral infections increase glucose levels in blood and make diabetes harder to control

Impact on psychosocial well being

- sense of bereavement associate with tooth loss
- decreased self-confidence
- poorer self-image
- social isolation
- embarrassment

Gum Disease



Risk factors

- smoking (can lower chances for successful treatment)
- hormonal changes (women)
- genetics
- age
- vitamine C deficiency
- poor diet
- poorly fitted partial dentures or bridges
- poorly aligned teeth
- medications that reduce saliva and cause dry mouth increase vulnerability to gum disease
- medications that cause abnormal overgrowth of gum tissue make proper oral hygiene more difficult
- illnesses including cancer or AIDS and their treatments may negatively affect health of gums
- illnesses including diabetes and Parkinson's disease may affect salivary glands and cause dry mouth, which increases production of bacteria
- Diagnosing periodontitis
- symptoms may be sign of serious problem

Visit a Dentist

- Dentist or hygienist may take medical history to identify underlying conditions or risk factors
- Dentist or hygienist will examine gums
- May use "probe" to check for and measure pockets (this is usually painless)
- May take x-ray to determine if bone loss has occurred
- May refer to a Periodontitis if needed