

Gum Disease

Gum Disease is swelling or soreness of the gums (soft tissue) around your teeth.

It is caused by bacteria in plaque, a sticky, colorless film that forms on teeth. The plaque bacteria contain toxins that inflame the gums.

If you do not remove plaque by brushing and flossing your teeth, it can build up and infect your gums, teeth and the bone that supports your teeth. If not treated by a dentist, you can lose your teeth.

There are three stages of gum disease:

Gingivitis - This is the first stage. Your gums feel tender and you may see some bleeding when you brush or floss.

Periodontitis - At this stage, plaque spreads to the roots of your teeth causing an infection which can damage the bone and fibers that hold your teeth in place. Your gums may begin to pull away from your teeth. Proper dental care and better home care can help prevent more damage.

Advanced Periodontitis - In this final stage of gum disease, the fibers and bone holding your teeth in place are destroyed.

How do I know if I have gum disease?

- Gums that bleed and are red, puffy, swollen or sore
- Gums that have pulled away from your teeth
- Changes in the way your teeth fit together
- Pus that appears between your teeth and gums
- Constant bad breath or a bad taste in your mouth

