

Periodontitis: How do I know if I have it?

Though the damage of periodontal disease is caused by inflammation, it usually is not a painful disease. Bone loss happens over time, so it is not obvious from day to day.

Some signs of periodontitis:

- Bleeding gums when brushing or flossing.
- Receding gums or exposed root surfaces that lead to sensitivity.
- Loose teeth.

Periodontitis has been associated with the following conditions:

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Smoking

There is a two-way relationship between these conditions and the development of the disease.

Is my mouth healthy?



Dentists have several tools to monitor the health of your teeth and gums. One measure is probing depth. A periodontal probe measures the depth from the edge of the gum line to the bottom of the sulcus, or base of the gums around the root.

The larger the number, the deeper the pocket:

- 1-3 mm are healthy sites.
- Anything 4mm or more are the beginnings of periodontal disease.
- Dentists probe all your teeth once per year to monitor changes and ensure maintenance of good oral health.

Oral Hygiene

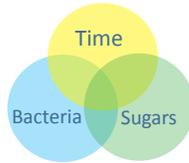


Easy as
1 - 2 - 3

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What is plaque?

Plaque is the soft, sticky buildup on teeth caused by the collection of bacteria. The bacteria feed off sugars in your diet, producing acid that leads to tooth decay and cavities.



Over time, if plaque is not removed, the bacteria can change into more harmful types that can cause damage to the teeth, gums, and bone around the tooth.



Disclosing solution shows plaque buildup in pink.

Plaque & tooth decay...

Tooth decay, or dental caries is the break down of the tooth. Diets high in sugars, especially if the sugar is left on teeth for long periods of time, allow bacteria to build up and cause more damage to the tooth. It is very important to reduce sugar intake and to brush regularly to avoid tooth decay.



How do I get rid of plaque?

1 BRUSH



Brush your teeth at least **TWO** times per day, **ALWAYS** before bedtime and then again after breakfast.

- Hold your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to the gum line and brush in circular motions.
- Divide your mouth into 4 quadrants and brush each quadrant for 30 seconds. Brush the cheek side, the tongue side and also the tops of each of your teeth. Finish by brushing your tongue.
- Use a soft bristle toothbrush and toothpaste with fluoride.

2 FLOSS



Use floss at least once per day to clean your gums and remove plaque from between your teeth.

- Take about a foot and a half of floss and wrap it around your middle fingers, creating a tigtrope that is about 2 inches long. Use your pointer fingers to pass the floss between your teeth, hugging the curve of the tooth and passing the floss gently down below the gum line.
- Remove the floss slowly and adjust the floss on your fingers so a fresh piece is used between each tooth.

3 SEE YOUR DENTIST...

- For oral evaluations to determine your oral health needs. Your dentist will determine a maintenance schedule for you to come back for regular cleanings.
- Professional cleanings remove plaque more thoroughly than you can with just toothbrush and floss.
- If you have periodontal disease, the dentist will recommend deep cleanings, to clean the root surface and remove the bacteria that are causing the disease.