

GUM DISEASE (PERIODONTITIS)



Dear

This leaflet has been given to you by your dentist as you have been identified to be suffering from gum disease. Please take the time to read this information sheet so that you may understand the causes, symptoms and implications of gum disease.

WHAT IS GUM DISEASE? (PERIODONTITIS)

- The term periodontitis, more commonly known as gum disease, refers to a group of inflammatory conditions which affect the supporting gum and bone the teeth. Gum disease affects as many as 15% of adults.
- It is classified according to the severity of the disease, the proportion of the teeth that are affected and finally the nature of the condition's onset.
- Gum disease involves bacteria found in dental plaque, which left undisturbed, goes on to cause inflammation, damage and eventually destruction of the gum and bone supporting the teeth.

Your dentist has diagnosed you with:

GENERALISED	MILD	CHRONIC	
LOCALISED	MODERATE	AGGRESSIVE	PERIODONTITIS (GUM DISEASE)
	SEVERE		

CAUSES

- 1) **Oral hygiene** – plaque and calculus/tartar containing bacteria cause damage to the gum and bone which support the teeth. **THIS MAKES CLEANING OF YOUR TEETH CRUCIAL TO HEALTH!**
- 2) **Smoking** – tar within cigarette smoke causes damage to the supporting bone of the teeth and limits healing of tissues due to lowering the local blood supply. Dry mouth caused by smoking, medications and immune conditions can increase the risk of gum disease.
- 3) **Genetics** – certain more aggressive types of gum disease can be related to one's genetic predisposition to the disease. Your dentist will have advised you if this applies to you.

- 4) **Uncontrolled diabetes** – poor sugar level control in diabetic individual limits blood supply and healing to the supporting tissues of the teeth. Other conditions affecting the immune system such as cancer and HIV are also causative factors.
- 5) **Pregnancy, puberty, menopause and monthly period hormonal changes** – these hormonal changes make gums become more sensitive with a higher risk of gum disease developing.

IMPLICATIONS

- Gum disease leads to swollen, red, sore and bleeding gums, halitosis, gum recession, movement/shaking of teeth, changes in tooth position, tooth ache/pain and infection/abscesses.
- In many cases tooth loss and subsequent difficulty eating, speaking and smiling can occur due to changes in one's bite and tooth position.
- Bacteria from gum disease can get into the bloodstream and may increase the risk of stroke and heart disease.
- Limitations in tooth replacement such as the use of dental implants which require sufficient volume of bone for success.

DETECTION AND TREATMENT

Whilst we can help you understand the disease and help you to slow down or stop its progression and prevent it reoccurring, it is your responsibility to manage your gum disease on a daily basis at home.

- PLEASE ALWAYS ASK YOUR DENTIST QUESTIONS IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THE INFORMATION GIVEN TO YOU INCLUDING ANY DEMONSTRATIONS ON HOW TO MANAGE THIS DISEASE.
- IMPROVE THE CLEANING OF YOUR TEETH – BRUSH TWICE A DAY, USE FLOSS OR TEPE BRUSHES BETWEEN YOUR TEETH REGULARLY AND USE THE MOUTHWASH RECOMMENDED BY YOUR DENTIST.
- REGULAR DENTAL CHECK UPS DETERMINED AND RECOMMENDED BY YOUR DENTIST. REVIEWS ARE USUALLY REQUIRED EVERY 3 MONTHS INITIALLY.
- ATTEND ON TIME ALL APPOINTMENTS WITH YOUR DENTIST FOR TOOTH CLEANING (WITH OR WITHOUT LOCAL ANAESTHETIC) AND HYGIENE INSTRUCTION TO MANAGE THIS DISEASE.
- STOP SMOKING AND EAT A HEALTHY BALANCED DIET.

Please sign and date below to confirm that you were provided with this information sheet.

NAME:

SIGNATURE:

DATE: