

Periodontal disease (also called periodontitis) is common, but can be prevented.

What is Periodontal Disease?

- It is an infection that affects the gums and bone that support the teeth. It starts when plaque (a sticky film) builds up and causes red, swollen, or bleeding gums. This early stage is called **gingivitis**.
- If gingivitis is not treated, the infection can get worse and damage the bone that holds the teeth in place. This later stage is called **periodontitis**.
- Periodontitis is often called a **“silent disease”** because it usually does not cause pain.
- The bacteria can also enter the blood and can be linked to other health conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease.

Big risk factors for periodontal disease are smoking and diabetes.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Red, swollen or sore gums that bleed when brushed or flossed
- Receding gums (gums pull away from teeth and show roots)
- Loose teeth or shifting teeth
- New gaps between the teeth
- Bad breath that does not go away
- Pus (thick fluid) and sores in the mouth
- Dentures that no longer fit

If you notice any signs of periodontal disease, make an appointment with an oral health professional as soon as possible.

Red Gums



Receding Gums



Gaps in Teeth



Gingivitis can be reversed. Bone loss from periodontal disease cannot be reversed, but treatment can help stop it from getting worse.

4 Steps to Prevent and Reverse Gingivitis

1

Brush your teeth at a slight angle towards your gums. Use gentle, side-to-side, wiggling motions

2

Clean in between the teeth every day using floss or an interdental (between teeth) brush

3

Rinse the mouth with an antiseptic (germ-killing) mouthwash

4

Schedule regular check-ups with an oral health professional

