What Should I Do If I Have Gum Disease?

❏ Brush and clean between teeth with floss or an interdental cleaner the way your dentist tells you to do.

❏ Brush with an ADA Accepted anti-gingivitis toothpaste, such as Colgate Total,® and use a soft-bristled toothbrush.

❏ Your dentist may prescribe a special rinse such a Colgate® PerioGard® to help fight gingivitis.

❏ Get regular professional dental cleanings. This is the only way to remove plaque that has built up and hardened into tartar. Your dental professional will clean or "scale" your teeth to remove the tartar above and below the gumline.

❏ Do not smoke cigarettes or use other forms of tobacco.

❏ If your condition is very serious, surgery may be needed. Your dentist will tell you whether or not you need surgery. If you agree, the surgery can be done here at our clinic.

❏ Get regular checkups. They're the best way to discover and treat early gum disease before it leads to a more serious problem.

Did you know?

People with diabetes are more likely to develop gum disease and lose teeth. Like all infections, gum disease may cause blood sugar to rise and make diabetes harder to control.

For more information on gum disease, ask your oral heath care professional. In addition, you may visit the Oral Care section at www.colgate.com.

It all begins with good brushing and flossing.

Follow these instructions on brushing and flossing to keep your smile healthy and help prevent little problems from becoming big ones.

How To Brush

1. Using a soft-bristled toothbrush, clean the outer surfaces of each tooth. Angle the brush along the outer gumline. Gently brush back and forth.

2. Brush the inside surface of each tooth, where plaque may accumulate most. Brush gently back and forth. Use the tip of the brush to clean behind each front tooth, both top and bottom. Then, brush the chewing surface of each tooth, gently brushing back and forth.

How To Floss

1. Use about 18" of floss, leaving an inch or two to work with.

2. Gently follow the curves of your teeth.

3. Be sure to clean beneath the gumline, but avoid snapping the floss on the gums.

Colgate®

This pamphlet contains information about a use of Colgate Total® that is not approved by the FDA. For more information on gum disease, consult your oral heath care professional. In addition, you may visit the Oral Care section at www.colgate.com

Gum Disease

Colgate®

What is Gum Disease?

Gum disease is swelling or soreness of the gums (the soft tissue) around your teeth. It is caused by the bacteria in plaque, a sticky, colorless film that forms on your teeth. The plaque bacteria have 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 them. If not treated by a dentist, you can lose your teeth.

The signs of gum disease are not always easy to see and can be painless. The earlier gum disease is caught, the easier it is to treat. That's why it's important to see your dentist regularly.

There are Three Stages of Gum Disease:

• Gingivitis

This is the first stage of gum disease. Your gums may feel tender and you may see some bleeding when you brush or floss. The American Academy of Periodontology considers gingivitis a mild periodontal disease. Gingivitis can be reversed by having a dentist or hygienist clean your teeth and with proper brushing and flossing at home.
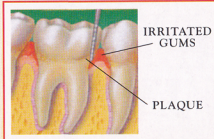
GINGIVITIS

Gums are mildly sore, may be red or puffy and may bleed during brushing.

Labels: IRRITATED GUMS, PLAQUE

• Periodontitis

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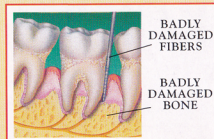
PERIODONTITIS

Gums pull away from the teeth. This lets plaque move toward the roots, supporting fibers and bone.

Labels: DAMAGED FIBERS, DAMAGED BONE
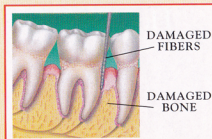
• Advanced Periodontitis

In this final stage of gum disease, the fibers and bone holding your teeth in place are destroyed. This can cause your teeth to shift or loosen and can affect your bite. If treatment can't save your teeth, they may need to be removed.

ADVANCED PERIODONTITIS

Supporting fibers and bone are destroyed. Teeth become loose and may need to be removed.

Labels: BADLY DAMAGED FIBERS, BADLY DAMAGED BONE

How Do I Know if I Have Gum Disease?

To find out if you have gum disease, your dentist or hygienist needs to check your teeth and gums. Since early gum disease can be reversed, it's important to see your dentist or hygienist if you see any of the following:

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

Your oral health care provider can tell for sure if you have gum disease. That's why it's so important to have regular dental checkups.
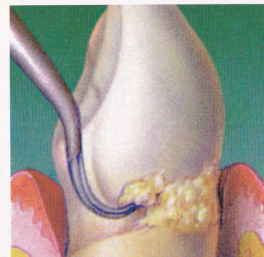
During scaling, plaque and tartar are removed from the crown and roots of the tooth.