

ARE YOU AT RISK?

According to United States Government statistics, periodontal disease affects 75% of our adult population.

- | | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Do your gums bleed when you brush your teeth or toothpick between them? | - | - |
| 2. Are your gums red, swollen, or tender? | - | - |
| 3. Are your gums pulling away? | - | - |
| 4. Do you see pus between your teeth and your gums when the gums are pressed? | - | - |
| 5. Are your permanent teeth loose or separating? | - | - |
| 6. Is there any change in the way your teeth fit together? | - | - |
| 7. Is there any change in the fit of your partial or dentures? | - | - |
| 8. Do you have bad breath? | - | - |

*If you have answered YES to any of the previous questions, please continue reading.

What is periodontal disease?

New research has given us a new understanding of periodontal disease. Periodontal disease is an infectious and inflammatory disease caused by the bacteria in plaque. There are approximately 300 different species of bacteria in your mouth. As researchers continue to get a better understanding of this infectious disease, we will continue to modify and refine our treatment. ***In almost every case this is controllable.***

How does periodontal disease affect my gums?

Simply put, the plaque irritates the gum tissue. The gum can actually detach itself from the tooth. This causes pockets to occur that become breeding grounds for even more bacteria. Your body reacts to this increase in bacteria as it would to a cut on your hand. It rushes blood to the area so the white blood cells can attack the infection. Just like an infected cut on your hand, the area becomes red, swollen and sometimes tender. This is why your gums will bleed and bleeding is not normal! ***In many people, if this process is not stopped, it will eventually affect the bone and increased mobility or loss of teeth may occur.***

What can be done to arrest periodontal disease?

Your dental professional, *along with your help*, can control the disease. First the doctor must examine you to determine if your symptoms are due to periodontal disease. This is done by visual examination, X-rays, and measuring the depth of the pockets. If you have gum disease, the dental professional will schedule a series of appointments. The scheduled procedures will remove as much of the bacterial plaque as possible. This is necessary for your tissue to heal. ***While your dental professionals are doing their part, you can do your part at home. This must be done to maintain control of the bacteria in your mouth.***