

Gum Disease



If you would like to know more about gum disease and what we can do to help you, please contact us for further information.



HOW IS GUM DISEASE TREATED?

At Apple Dental, we are proud to have an experienced and highly qualified dental hygienist in our clinical team, as part of our commitment to helping you achieve and maintain healthy teeth and gums. Our hygienist works collaboratively with our dentists to provide you with exceptional care and valuable oral health advice.

We recommend you visit our centre for regular check-up appointments with our dental hygienist. Our hygienist is our resident expert in oral health and oral hygiene, and will provide regular cleanings to remove plaque and tartar deposits from hard to reach places. Our hygienist will also assist you in achieving and maintaining optimal oral health through detailed home care advice.

After your initial examination, which will include radiographs (x-rays), your hygienist will assess your oral health and clean your teeth removing any tartar from above and below the gums. You will then be shown any areas you may be missing with your oral care routine and be shown the correct techniques to brush and floss your teeth at home. If gum disease is detected, measurements may be taken of your gums (gum pockets) to determine exactly how much tissue loss has already taken place.

In general, our dental hygienist will use preventive, educational and therapeutic methods for controlling oral diseases which will in turn help you achieve and maintain excellent dental health.

The entire team at Apple Dental is committed to helping all of our patients, young and old, achieve their ideal goal of healthy teeth and excellent dental hygiene to achieve a great smile for life.



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WHAT IS GUM DISEASE?

Gum disease is an infection of the body and, like all infections, should not go untreated. The early stage of gum disease is called gingivitis, which is the inflammation of the gums caused by plaque and tartar build-up. This build-up may cause gum tenderness and bleeding when brushing or flossing.

Gum disease is reversible if treated early but may be difficult for you to detect. If you have noticed any of the symptoms below, you should see one of the dentists or hygienists at Apple Dental to discuss a personal care plan to avoid gingivitis.

- Bleeding when teeth are brushed or flossed (healthy gums do not bleed)
- Gum tenderness
- Red and / or swollen gums
- Bad breath and / or bad taste in your mouth
- Teeth becoming loose or wobbly
- Teeth appearing longer because gums are receding
- Gums are itchy or sore
- Spaces appearing between teeth

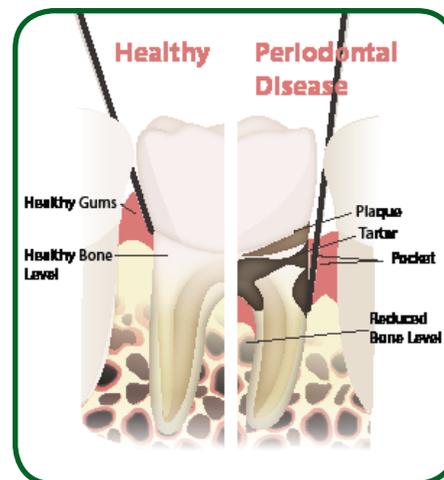
If left untreated, gingivitis may progress to periodontitis. This is a painless process so without proper supervision, periodontitis often leads to tooth loss through unnoticed loss of the gum and jawbone tissues that support the teeth.



DO I HAVE GUM DISEASE?

Healthy gums are the key to a great smile and keeping your teeth for life. Gum disease, also known as periodontitis, is the leading cause of tooth loss in Australian adults. It begins as red, puffy and swollen gums caused by the build up of bacteria on the teeth. This is called gingivitis and is the body's immune response to the bacterial attack on the gum tissues. When gingivitis remains unchecked and untreated, it progresses to periodontitis, where gum tissue and jaw bone breaks down and tooth loss becomes a realistic concern.

The loss of a natural tooth can cause severe complications for the surrounding teeth, causing them to become crooked and overloaded with biting pressure. Not only will the teeth become more difficult to clean, but the effects can lead to damage in the jaw joint. A missing tooth root will also cause the jawbone to recede, and if several teeth are lost the bite loses support, causing facial muscles to lose their elasticity. When diagnosed early, gum disease is a reversible condition and with proper treatment and maintenance, your mouth can be restored to total optimum health.



WHAT CAUSES GUM DISEASE?

The primary cause of gum disease is plaque, the sticky film of bacteria which builds up on the surface of teeth and gums. If plaque is not removed, it hardens to become tartar which cannot be removed by your toothbrush or floss. The plaque and tartar causes the gums to become inflamed and if unattended will start to destroy the bone and fibres that hold your teeth in place.

Other factors which contribute to gum disease include smoking, diabetes, pregnancy and other hormonal changes, some medications and chemotherapy.



Healthy Gums



Moderate Periodontal Disease



Severe Periodontal Disease