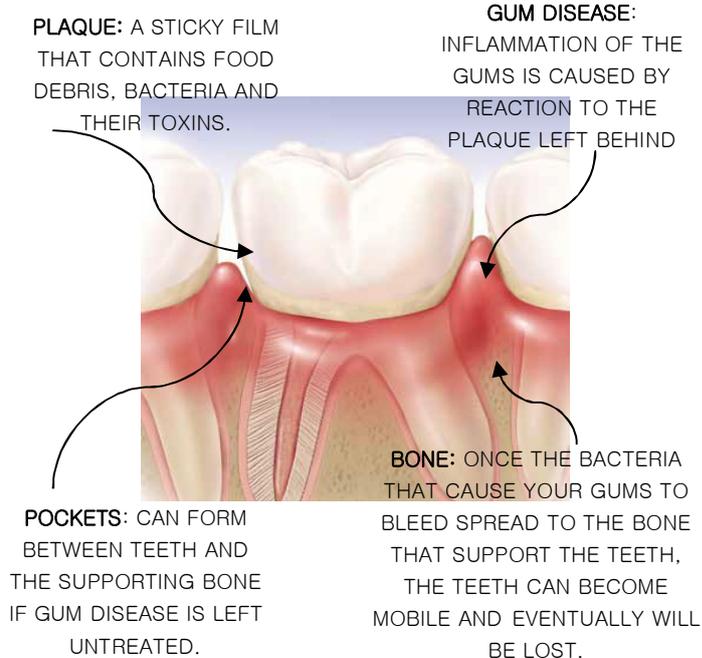


GUM DISEASE

Gum disease is inflammation of the gums. It is common but not normal and is preventable with good oral hygiene measures.

If plaque is not cleaned thoroughly from teeth it causes the gums to become inflamed so they look puffy, red and bleed regularly.

If you ignore gum disease it can lead to tooth loss.



TIPS TO PREVENT GUM DISEASE

- Brush teeth and gums. Floss in between every tooth or use tapes if we have recommended those.
- Change your toothbrush every three months
- If your gums bleed don't stop brushing and flossing. Your gums are different from any other part of your body and will bleed first before they start to heal.
- If you smoke, stop smoking, this prevents your gums repairing

Gum disease cannot be cured; it can only be controlled with help from your dentist or hygienist but mainly by your hard work at home.

Visiting the hygienist regularly helps reduce the build up of tartar on the teeth and in the pockets, and it also disrupts bacteria that can live under the gums. Your visits to the hygienist are tailored to you, your diagnosis and your clinical need. The frequency and duration of your hygiene visits will vary from patient to patient and will always depend on your dentist's recommendation.

You will find that after gum treatment, your gums will start to shrink down the tooth, reducing the pocket that has formed. This will mean that cleaning at home is a little easier. This is called "gingival recession" and can be sensitive at first.

Frequent hygiene visits when you no longer have active gum disease can actually be harmful to your gums and cause them to recede, leading to sensitivity and cosmetic concerns. Recent guidelines have been published to advise dentists on better ways to manage gum health: <http://www.bsperio.org.uk/publications/downloads/roadshow-periodontal-treatment.pdf>

If you have no active gum disease, your screening gum score will be 0-2, and you will rarely need to see the hygienist, more than 1-2 times per year to maintain healthy gums. Stain removal is a cosmetic procedure, the treatment of which can be discussed with your dentist. Regular visits to your dentist for routine examinations will mean your gum score is updated at each visit.