

# DENTAL HEALTH

Causes, symptoms and solutions  
for your dental health care.



# Dental Health

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## Disclaimer

***We hope you enjoy reading this publication, however, we do suggest you read our disclaimer.***

All the material written in this document is provided for informational purposes only and is general in nature.

Every person is a unique individual and what has worked for some, or even many, may not work for you. Any information perceived as advice must be considered in light of your own particular set of circumstances.

The author or person sharing this information does not assume any responsibility for the accuracy or outcome of your use of the content.

Every attempt has been made to provide well-researched and up-to-date content at the time of writing. Now all the legalities have been taken care of, please enjoy the content.

## Introduction

Many people are surprised to find that there is a correlation between dental health and coronary health, and further come to realize that our dental health (or ill-health) also affects other aspects of their physical wellbeing

However, the influence of our dentition extends beyond that. Even though many people try to avoid personally confronting it, the state of our teeth and gums greatly affects our mental and emotional wellbeing too.

How many people's ability to fully and confidently express themselves or present themselves to the world is diminished by the ravages of gum disease or tooth decay?

There can be no doubt that an open display of healthy teeth – a happy smile – is one of the most uplifting experiences anyone can experience.

To not be able to confidently or comfortably be able to make that very natural display due to dental disease that could be avoided or repaired is a tragedy.

And this circumstance is far from rare. Dental disease is the most common disease in the world. Yet, as it can so readily be avoided or treated, it is obviously the most neglected one.

'Dental Health' is a resource for those with dental problems, and those who wish to avoid them.

## Bleeding Gums - Causes and Effective Treatments



A healthy lifestyle is a big part of preventing bleeding gums.

Do you experience gum bleeding? If it is rarely an occurrence, there's no need to worry, but if the bleeding becomes frequent, then you should not take it for granted and seek treatment as soon as possible.

Frequent gum bleeding is a sign of a problem and you will need to find out the cause. Taking action before it becomes an advanced gum disease issue is essential. Based on some studies, severe gum disease affects people with other health problems such as diabetes and heart disease.

## **Causes of Frequent Gum Bleeding**

To know the treatment, you must first know why your gums bleed, and these are the common causes:

- Bleeding disorders such as hemophilia
- Dentures that don't fit properly
- Gingivitis or gum inflammation
- Harmful plaque, tartar, and bacteria build up on your gum line
- Hormonal changes
- Improper use of dental floss
- Insufficient or improper brushing of teeth
- Periodontitis or severe gum disease
- Taking medicines such as aspirin or ibuprofen
- Damage to the gum tissue not caused by gum disease
- Use of blood thinners
- Using a hard-bristled or worn-out toothbrush
- Vitamin C and K deficiency.

## **Treatments For Bleeding Gums**

These are the various ways to treat or prevent your gums from bleeding, depending on the cause. Here are a few for your consideration.

### **Short-Term or Emergency Treatment Suggestions**

#### ***Put Ice On The Affected Area***

Put a cold compress, ice cube, or ice pack against the bleeding gums to soothe the swelling and regulate blood flow to stop the bleeding, but consult a doctor if the bleeding continues.

#### ***Rinse Your Mouth With Warm Saltwater***

Wash your mouth several times by gargling a glass of warm water with half a teaspoon of salt. This is to help lessen the bacteria and stop the gum bleeding.

### ***Use An Antibacterial Mouthwash***

This kind of mouthwash contains chlorhexidine and hydrogen peroxide that can heal and prevent gums from bleeding. They both can kill bacteria, lessen inflammation, and prevent the onset of gingivitis, which causes gum bleeding.

Please take note that if your bleeding gums don't stop after a few days, see a dentist as soon as possible for a check-up. They will thoroughly clean off the plaque and tartar build-up, which will start the healing process.

### **Long-Lasting Treatment and Solutions**

#### ***Observe Good Oral Hygiene***

- a. Brush your teeth regularly (at least 2 times a day for two minutes) with a soft-bristled toothbrush in a circling motion to have healthy gums. But replace the brush after 3 to 4 months for it to be effective as a teeth and gums cleaner.
- b. Use a toothpaste that is good for the gums too, that can help prevent plaque build-up on your teeth and around the gum line.
- c. Floss your teeth regularly and properly to remove plaque under your gum line and promote gum health. Do it gently.
- d. Have your dental check-up and cleaning at least twice a year to make sure no plaque and tartar can build up.

#### ***Do Not Smoke***

Smoking lowers your immune system, so it is harder to ward off bacteria from plaque and tartar. Smoking damages the gums and is the primary cause of severe gum disease, according to studies. That's why smokers' gums are more prone to bleeding.

### ***Maintain A Balanced Diet And Avoid Frequent Snacking***

Especially avoid starchy processed and sugar-laden foods. They can cause gum bleeding and gingivitis because they stick to your teeth and gums when they break down as sugar. Starchy foods to avoid or reduce include white bread, cakes, cookies, and chips.

### ***Avoid Or Reduce Stress To Prevent Gum Disease***

Stress depresses the immune system, so your gums can't fight infection as effectively, which can trigger gum disease and bleeding.

### ***Add Vitamin C And Vitamin K To Your Diet***

Eat vitamin C-rich foods like citrus fruits, tomatoes, broccoli, sprouts to avoid gum infection and bleeding. If you are vitamin C deficient and have frequent gum bleeding, it will worsen despite having good oral hygiene. This vitamin nourishes your connective tissues and protects your gum lining. You can also take a vitamin C supplement with the recommended dosage for your age.

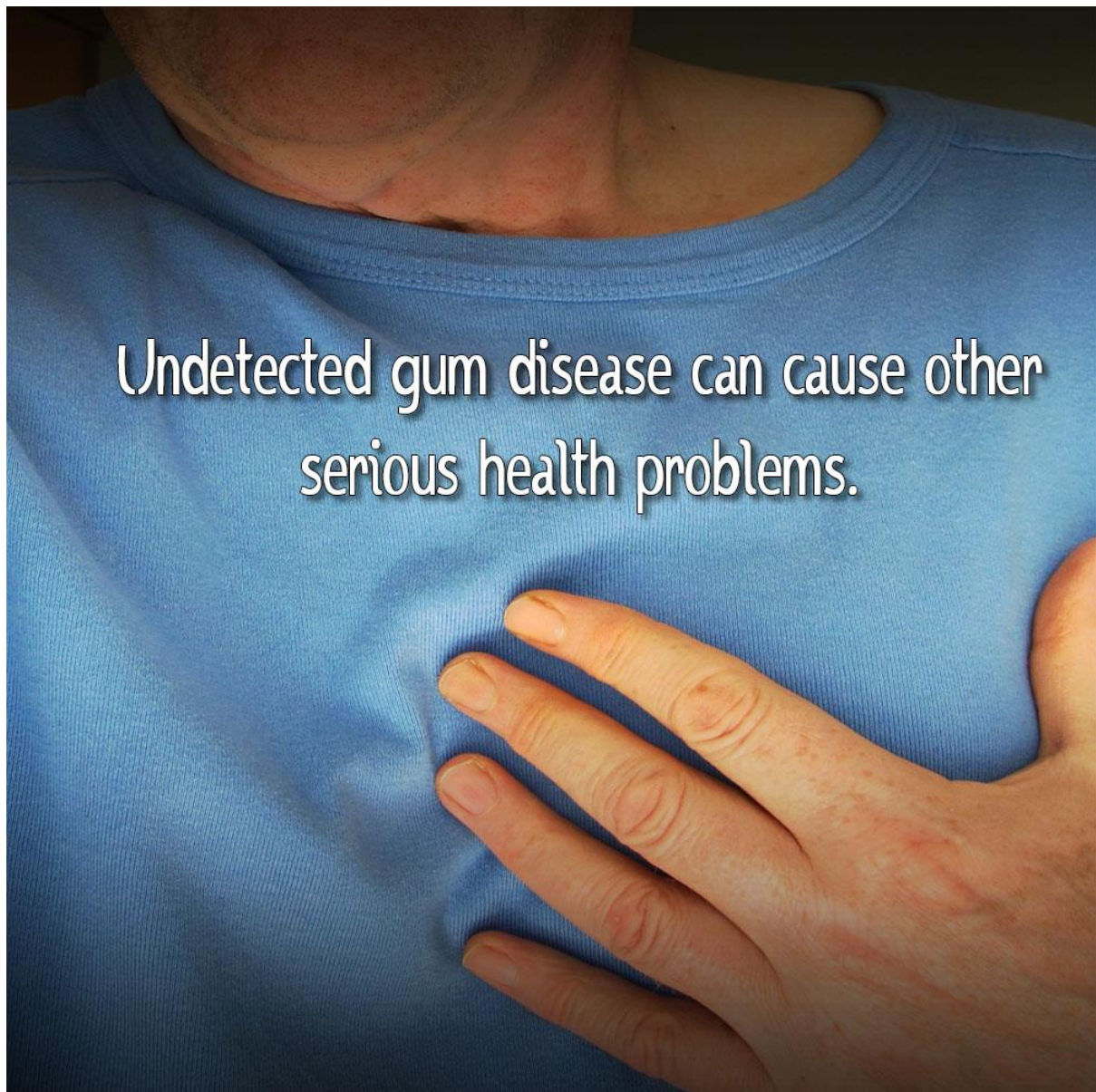
If you are vitamin K deficient, consult a doctor about how much you need to take in your diet. Some K-rich foods include green leafy vegetables, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, fish, liver, meat, and eggs. Lack of vitamin K may cause an abnormal amount of bleeding, especially in people prone to blood clots.

### ***Drink Green Tea***

The natural antioxidant catechin in green tea promotes periodontal health to help prevent gum diseases that cause bleeding gums. You may drink 3 to 4 cups daily.

Based on the causes and treatments discussed, you will notice that a healthy lifestyle is the key to preventing gum disease. It will also stop or reduce bleeding gums.

## What Are The Signs Of Gum Disease?



Dental health is an issue that is often ignored by many people. Unless extreme pain is experienced and a visit becomes essential, a consult with a dentist may never occur.

Perhaps one reason is that dental procedures can be expensive, and the cost overrides the need to have a checkup. Another reason is that some people fear a visit to the dentist!

However, you can be unaware of any potential problems because there may be little or no pain during the early stages. If you don't go to the dentist for a regular check-up and professional cleaning, you run the risk of developing gum disease.

If not detected early, it may lead to an increased risk of other health issues. Therefore, it's necessary to know the signs before it becomes severe.

### **How Do You Know You Have Gum Disease?**

The early signs of gum disease or the gingivitis stage are:

- Bleeding gums – It happens when you are brushing and flossing. Your gums bleed easily, even from a touch.
- Change in the color of your gums - pink gums are healthy gums. The first signs your gums are in trouble are when they become red, swollen, and tender. It usually begins with inflammation at the gum's base.

If gingivitis is not taken care of, gum infection can go beyond your gum line and through the bones and tissues that support your teeth.

This can cause severe gum disease called periodontitis or periodontal disease.

The signs of severe gum disease or periodontal disease are:

- Bad breath - When your breath has an unpleasant smell despite doing your oral hygiene. It's a sign you have plaque and tartar that cause bacteria to increase in your mouth.

The more plaque you have, the more bacteria that will feed on them. These bacteria discharge toxins that irritate the gums and cause a foul smell.

- Dental abscess - This is a pus sac between the gums and teeth caused by a bacterial infection.
- The bacteria accumulate under your gums and bone of teeth if the food you eat is always trapped, and you ignore good oral hygiene.
- Teeth move or become loose - Periodontitis damages the bones holding your teeth, so they can loosen or move and make biting and eating difficult.
- Receding gums - This is a condition where your gums pull away from your teeth and expose the roots of your teeth. Your teeth will look longer because your gums get smaller and create a pocket.
- Your teeth become sensitive - It is a sign of gum disease related to receding gums. Because the dentin, which is the sensitive part of your teeth is exposed, it causes sensitivity when you drink or eat something cold.
- Unpleasant taste in your mouth - A lingering unpleasant taste such as bitter, foul, or metallic may be because of abscesses, infection, or inflammation.

### **Gum Disease Linked To Other Health Problems**

According to studies, gingivitis and periodontitis may affect other parts of your body like the brain, heart, and lungs. Researchers have discovered these important facts:

- Periodontitis speeds up the accumulation of Beta-amyloid, a microscopic brain protein fragment, which causes Alzheimer's. The bacteria in persons with periodontitis can also be found in persons with Alzheimer's.

- The bacteria in your gums might enter the bloodstream and be driven to other organs like the heart and can result in heart inflammation and damage.

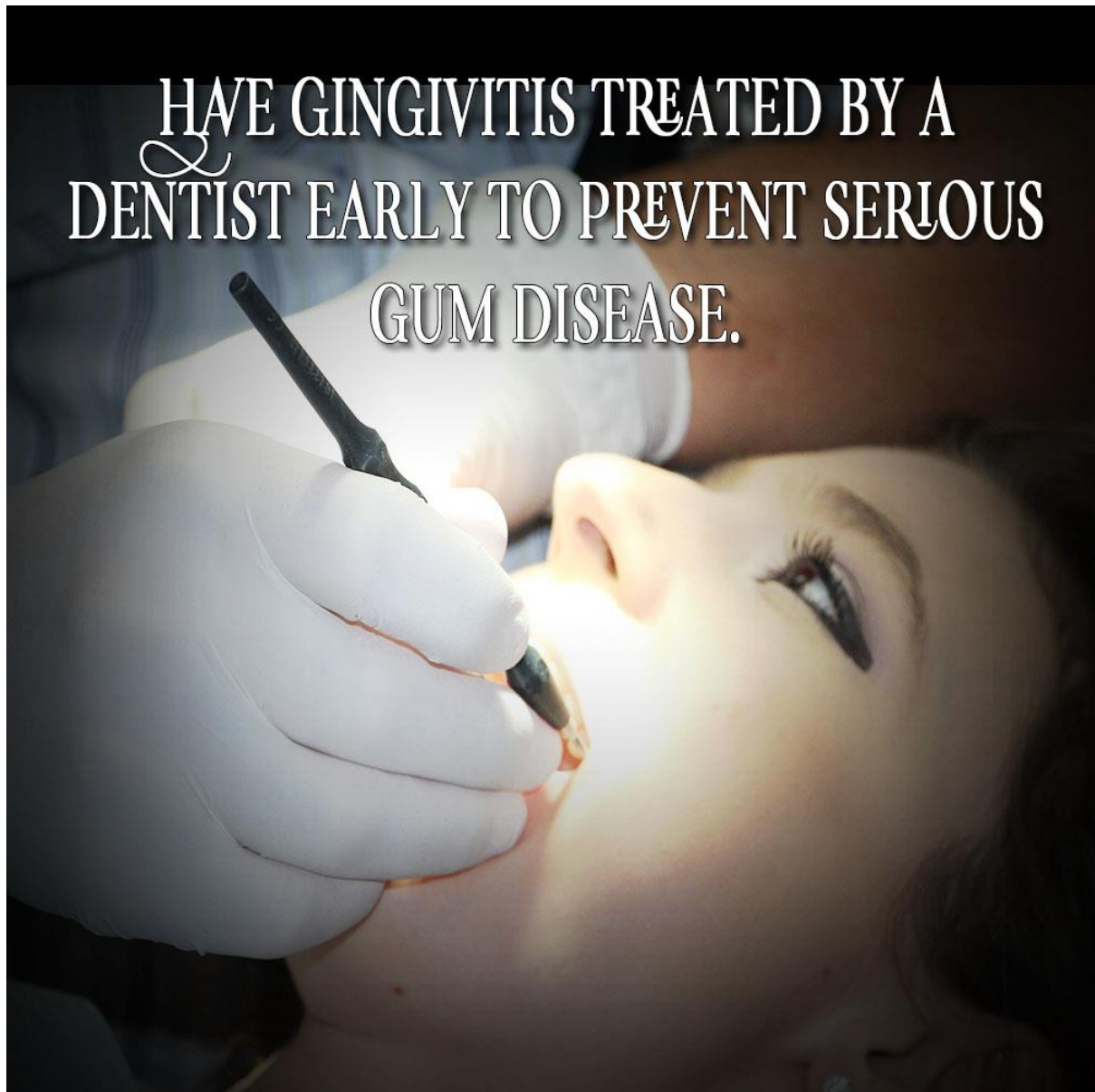
The bacteria found in gingivitis cases, *P.gingivalis*, is also the most common bacteria thriving in the heart's coronary artery.

- An enzyme called Treponema denticola, created by a kind of bacteria in gum disease is present in some gastrointestinal tumors and can cause pancreatic cancer.

Gum disease is a problem you should not overlook. Although it has health risks, it is curable and preventable if diagnosed and treated early. See your dentist if you have the signs.

Above all, maintain good oral hygiene and have a regular dental check-up to avoid gum disease and related serious health threats.

## Gingivitis Causes, Symptoms, and Treatments



HAVE GINGIVITIS TREATED BY A  
DENTIST EARLY TO PREVENT SERIOUS  
GUM DISEASE.

During our youth, we often neglect to practice good oral hygiene. We're too busy having fun to spend time flossing. We eat foods that are unknowingly harmful to our teeth and gums.

Then, as time goes by the plaque accumulates at the base of your teeth, sitting on your gum line.

Ignoring plaque will let them harden into tartar and invite bacteria to thrive. Accumulation of bacteria, together with mucus and particles of food that have not been brushed off, will lead to a gum disease called Gingivitis.

### **What is Gingivitis?**

Gingivitis is a mild gum disease that causes inflammation, irritation, and redness to your gums or gingiva. These are the bases that support your teeth. Over time, the plaque and tartar that stay on your teeth will irritate your gingiva and make it swollen and sensitive. Then your gums will bleed easily.

Although it starts as a relatively mild condition, you cannot chew your food properly if it becomes severe because your gums will recede, and the teeth will lose their support.

If it occurs, you must have a dental treatment to prevent periodontitis, the primary cause of tooth loss, especially among elderly persons.

### **Causes/Risk Factors of Gingivitis**

- Bacteria, fungus, or viruses that infect the mouth.
- Diseases such as HIV, diabetes, and cancer.
- Genetics, if your parents have a history of gum disease.
- Hormonal change because of menopause, menstruation, pregnancy, or puberty that make gums more sensitive and prone to bleeding.
- Malnutrition, an unhealthy diet, or inadequate nutrition such as vitamins C and B3 deficiency.
- Oral medications that decrease saliva flow and cause abnormal development of gum tissues.
- Poor oral hygiene or mouth wounds.
- Reaction to foreign things such as poor-fitting dentures or retainers.
- Smoking.
- Systematic factors that include allergies and genetic disorders.
- Age – as you age, the risk of developing gingivitis increases.

## Symptoms Of Gingivitis

- Bad breath even after brushing and not eating.
- Bleeding gums when you are brushing and flossing.
- Your gums become bright or dark red and swollen instead of a pinkish color.
- Gums are tender and cause pain when touched and may bleed.
- Receding gums where your gums pull away from your teeth.

## What Are The Treatments For Gingivitis?

In order to get the right diagnosis and treatment, you still need to consult a dentist. If they see that the depth of your teeth's pocket is over 3 millimeters, you are a candidate for gingivitis and gum disease.

Removal of plaque and tartar during the early stage of gingivitis is important so that inflammation will subside.

Here are a few things you may need to do to help reverse and prevent gingivitis.

- The dentist may prescribe you an antibacterial mouthwash containing chlorhexidine or chlorine dioxide. It will contain the growth of bacteria. Unlike ordinary mouthwashes, they have no significant amount of alcohol that will irritate your inflamed gums.

Chlorhexidine is easier and more potent to use while chlorine dioxide has a more preferable taste but is less potent in preventing plaque formation.

- Have professional teeth and gum cleaning once or twice a year. People with a predisposition to the disease may need cleaning every three months.

- Scaling - The dentist will remove the hardened plaque and tartar on top and beneath your gumline thoroughly. This procedure is not painful because you will be given a local anesthetic. They may also need to repeat the procedure as needed.
- Try using an electric toothbrush. It is more efficient than a manual toothbrush in cleaning your teeth and gums to prevent plaque.
- Proper brushing and flossing. Brush your teeth at least twice a day. Follow up with flossing once a day. This is effective hygiene for adults and children.
- Use a plaque and tartar control toothpaste to help prevent the onset of gum disease.
- If you have a predisposing disease such as diabetes, taking care of your health, and treating the condition, besides having good oral hygiene will help to prevent gingivitis.
- For postmenopausal women that have desquamative gingivitis, follow-up check-ups and constant cleaning are needed.

### **An Important Reminder**

Maintaining proper dental hygiene is necessary to avoid gingivitis from becoming a severe gum disease. It can hugely affect your overall health, so fight this gum disease if your teeth and gums are still healthy. If not, gingivitis is reversible with proper treatment and oral care.

## Bad Breath - The Causes and Solutions



Have you ever experienced talking to a person with foul-smelling breath? Or maybe you are the person suffering from bad breath.

Bad breath is the common term, it is actually called halitosis. Halitosis comes from the Latin word "halitus" which means breath.

Bad breath is embarrassing and affects many people. The stats are around 1 in 4 people and it's one of the main reasons people seek a dental consultation.

If you go to the dentist, some have smart detectors that can discover what chemicals are responsible for bad breath. Although the usual cause is a lack of good oral hygiene, there are other reasons for this oral health problem.

### **Causes Of Bad Breath**

Some are simple causes you have control over, others may be less so.

- Acid reflux leads to spitting up partially digested food from the stomach or sour-tasting liquid and in turn, produces bad breath.
- Bacteria may have settled on your tongue, particularly in the grooves and crevices.
- Diabetes complications, if not managed well, can induce chemicals called ketones, a process called ketosis, that will make your breath smell.
- Dry mouth can be experienced by people who are taking prescription medications. Some medicines can cause the mouth to become dry, which can lead to bad breath because of insufficient saliva washing away bacteria. Other drugs produce unpleasant smells as chemicals break down and are released in the breath.
- Eating vegetables belonging to the Allium family, such as garlic, onion, and chives. They contain high quantities of sulfur compounds that enter your bloodstream. When these enter your lungs, it causes bad breath.
- Formation of tonsil stones, caused by tonsillitis where bacteria, dead cells, and mucus are trapped. It is usually associated with post-nasal drip where the excess mucus leaks onto the throat and releases the odor.
- Fasting and low-carb dieting can produce halitosis. The breakdown of fats releases chemicals called ketones that have a strong odor.

- It may indicate a serious disease like cancer, liver failure, or metabolic diseases like diabetes. They cause bad breath because of the different chemicals they release or cause to be released.
- Plaque that develops on your teeth and gums creates foul-smelling volatile sulfur compounds (VSCs).
- Taking vitamin supplements in large doses.
- You may have gum disease, an allergy, or lactose intolerance.

## **Treatments and Prevention**

While there are many causes of bad breath, and we have just listed a few, don't worry because there are solutions.

### ***Observe Good Oral Hygiene Consistently***

- Use an antibacterial toothpaste.
- Brush your teeth, tongue, and gums thoroughly. Also, use a tongue scraper, if available, at least two times a day. Change your toothbrush every 3 to 4 months, so it is efficient as a tooth and gum cleaner.
- Gargle with an antiseptic mouth rinse to reduce bacteria on your gums, tongue, and in-between your teeth.
- Floss in between your teeth once a day after brushing.
- Clean your dentures well at least once every day. If you have a retainer, clean it before putting it back in your mouth with a cleaning product your dentist will recommend.

### ***Home Remedies***

There are home remedies you can make like baking soda mouthwash or a vinegar mouthwash. Combine two teaspoons of baking soda with one cup of warm water. Rinse your mouth for at least 30 seconds.

Baking soda can successfully diminish bad breath. Toothpaste containing baking soda is also helpful in killing bacteria in your mouth.

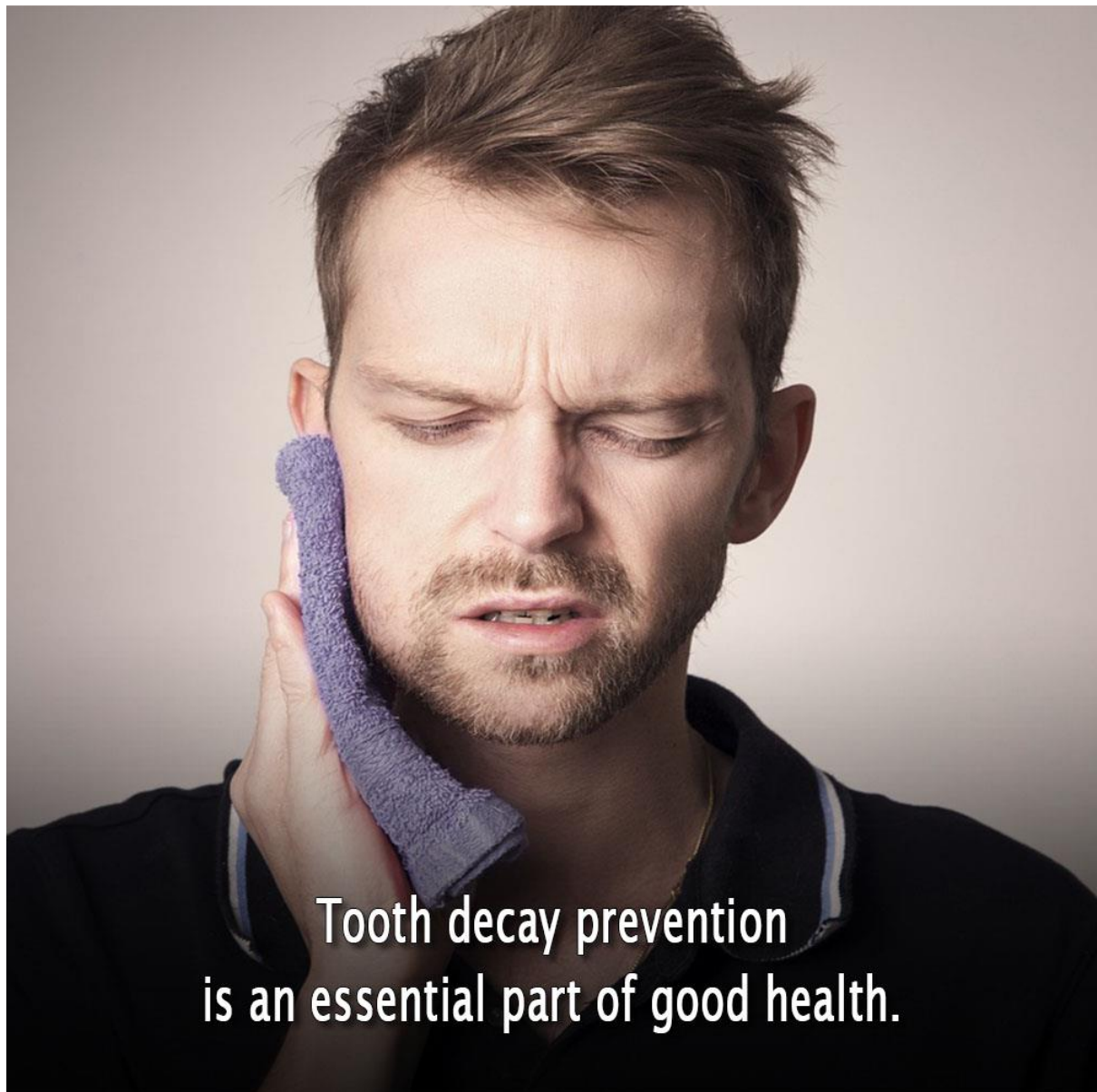
If you would like to try the vinegar mouthwash, combine two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar and one cup of water. Gargle for 30 seconds. It may lessen the growth of bacteria because vinegar contains acetic acid, a natural acid that inhibits bacterial growth.

### ***Here Are A Few More Ideas***

- Breath tabs or gum can target hard-to-reach areas like the back of your tongue. When chewed, they dissolve as a liquid to stimulate saliva flow, lessening the bad breath causing bacteria, and help to wipe out the volatile sulfur compounds. You may also chew sugar-free gums or candies to stimulate saliva.
- Use mouth lozenges and drink lots of water for hydration instead of coffee, soda, or alcohol.
- Avoid smoking tobacco because it produces an irritating, unpleasant smell in your mouth.
- Eat a healthy and nutritious diet and prevent frequent snacking, especially sugary and spicy foods that cause bad breath.
- Have a regular dental checkup and cleaning of teeth at least twice a year.

Following any of these home remedies and treatments, together with practicing good oral hygiene and healthy lifestyle modifications, can significantly reduce or get rid of your bad breath.

## Tooth Decay Prevention



Tooth decay and cavities are certainly related to each other, however, they are not technically the same. Tooth decay, also called dental caries, is a gradual oral disease.

It starts when the sticky plaque from food particles builds up bacterial populations that produce acid that destroy the protective layer of your teeth, the tooth enamel.

As the decay progresses, it creates a hole in your enamel, and that's when you have a cavity in your tooth.

If you ignore it, you may have a nasty toothache, infection, and tooth loss even if you are still young.

If you take care of your teeth from an early age, you will prevent tooth decay and cavities from destroying your smile and your enjoyment of eating without false teeth!

### **Things That You Can Do**

You can prevent tooth decay and cavities, or reverse them in their early stage, through these measures:

- Practice proper oral care every day. Gently and thoroughly brush your teeth after meals, floss once a day, and mouth rinse with an antibacterial mouthwash to reduce plaque and oral bacteria.
- Keep yourself hydrated with fresh water so your mouth doesn't get dry.
- Chew sugar-free gum to help stimulate saliva, which is a natural cleansing agent that prevents the growth of bacteria and plaque on your teeth.
- Stay away from sugary foods and drinks, and avoid frequent snacking. Drinking sweet beverages can cause plaque and tartar build-up.
- Eat fruits and vegetables which help stimulate saliva flow.
- Have regular visits, at least once a year, to your dentist because cavities caught early are less painful to treat. Plus, if you have any other dental issues your dentist will see them.

## Things That Your Dentist Can Do

The dentist will also treat or prevent tooth decay with the following options:

- Apply a fluoride gel on your teeth to remineralize them. Calcium and phosphate nourish your tooth enamel. You lose these minerals as you age, and from eating acidic and sweetened foods. Periodically, you may need to replenish them by remineralization.
- Use preventive liquid dental sealants that will block the bacteria from entering your teeth. By sealing the hollows on your molars, they will be protected from decay and cavities for a long time. This treatment also applies to children and teens.
- Use antibacterial treatments particularly if you have a medical problem, such as diabetes. Your dentist may recommend or prescribe an antibacterial mouth rinse to help prevent tooth decay and cavities.
- If the cavities cannot be prevented from getting worse, the dentist may remove the tooth or fill the cavity.

## Natural Home Solutions

If you are a person that doesn't like to use fluoride-based products, you can try these natural home solutions:

- Apply aloe vera gel to your teeth. Based on research, this gel has an antibacterial effect and may aid in remineralizing the affected enamel to prevent cavities from forming.
- Consume licorice root. Based on a trial, licorice root and the extract from it are antibacterial and may help in preventing cavities.
- Eat foods rich in calcium and minerals like broccoli, collard greens, dairy, and kale.

- Reduce the consumption of foods high in phytic acids such as cereals, legumes, rice, nuts, and wheat. Phytic acid may damage the enamel because it prevents the absorption of minerals needed to prevent tooth decay and cavities. If you do eat any, clean your teeth as soon as possible.
- Take vitamins B, D, iron, and magnesium supplements. These are micronutrients needed for bone health and to control inflammation to prevent cavities. They will mineralize your teeth to strengthen the enamel and help lessen cavities considerably.
- Another option is eating whole grains and seafood like tuna, salmon, and sardines, which are also rich in vitamin D.
- There are foods that aid in producing saliva, like bananas, Brussels sprouts, and peas.
- Consume foods rich in natural probiotics to balance your acidic pH. These include fermented foods like kefir, kombucha, pickles, kimchi, some cheeses, and yogurt. They will increase the healthy bacteria in your mouth to defend against plaque and tooth decay.
- Avoid foods and drinks with an imbalanced pH like coffee, that promote bacterial growth. Instead, drink green tea which contains polyphenol. It acts as a potent antioxidant and is anti-inflammatory, so it will improve your oral health.

As you can see, you can help to prevent tooth decay by following these measures and solutions. It can also be reversed at an early stage. If cavities already exist, don't delay visiting a dentist for treatment. It may be costly but will save you a lot of pain and tooth loss.

## Charcoal and Natural Teeth Whitening Remedies



If you are a person who once smiled with pearly white teeth, and now don't like your yellowing smile, here are some natural ingredients and methods of teeth whitening.

### **Activated Charcoal**

Using charcoal as a teeth whitening component is currently becoming a trend in wellness circles.

They use activated charcoal as an ingredient in toothpaste and also as a capsule and powder. These can be purchased online, in drugstores, or in natural food stores.

Activated charcoal is a food-grade oxidized version of charcoal, which is made from coconut shells, wood, and other raw materials. It is oxidized under intense heat to make it into a fine powder.

The capsule and powder forms are mixed with water to make it a paste. Use it to brush your teeth and wait for 3 minutes, then rinse it and brush again using regular toothpaste.

### **The Pros and Cons of Activated Charcoal**

It is used curatively because it is highly absorbable and can remove toxins. However, there is still no scientific evidence that it has a whitening effect on teeth.

But it has a cleaning effect because it is slightly abrasive and can absorb surface stains, but not below the teeth's enamel. To properly whiten your teeth, it has to work not only on the surface but also on deep-seated stains below your enamel.

Since charcoal is abrasive, it may not be good to use charcoal toothpaste every day. Your tooth enamel may wear out earlier and expose the dentin, the second layer of your tooth.

Make sure you choose one with a Dental Association's Seal of Approval because it is safe, beneficial, and will not cause damage to your enamel.

### **Other Natural Teeth Whitening Options**

In case you are not inclined to use activated charcoal as a teeth whitener because it can be messy, here are some other natural teeth whitening solutions you can choose from.

### ***Apple Cider Vinegar***

This is a well-known home remedy to whiten teeth. It can remove stains because it is acidic. Before swishing, dilute one teaspoon of ACV in a small cup of water. Gargle it for 3 minutes, then rinse your mouth. Only use diluted, and not too often, as the acid can attack tooth enamel.

### ***Baking Soda***

Also known as Sodium Bicarbonate, this can gently scrub away stains. Dip the toothbrush into it or brush with toothpaste and baking soda together. You can use it alone but avoid brushing too hard and make small circular movements to keep your gums safe from damage. Just add water and make it a paste before rubbing it on your teeth for two minutes and rinse.

### ***Epsom Salts***

Gargling Epsom salt mixed in warm water for a few minutes kills bacteria that stain and damage the teeth. You can also brush your teeth with it by dipping your toothbrush in the Epsom salt first.

## **Foods To Help Keep Your Teeth Whiter and Brighter**

There are also foods that people use to help keep their teeth naturally whiter and healthier. Apples are one most of us know about. Crunching on an apple helps clean the teeth but can also assist in keeping them whiter. Other watery and fibrous foods can also be effective.

Here are a few more for you to try.

### ***Banana Peels***

One byproduct, which you don't normally eat, is the banana peel. It has been proven to help whiten teeth and reduce stains. You can use the peel from a ripe but not discolored banana. Just rub the insides of the peel on your teeth for a few minutes. Then brush your teeth afterward.

## ***Celery***

Consuming fresh celery and other crunchy veggies can help prevent discoloration. Their texture rubs your teeth' surface and cleans the gaps of little particles. The water content in vegetables washes inside your mouth.

## ***Guava Leaves***

Guava leaves contain beneficial components such as flavonoids and phenols. Aside from reducing plaque-causing bacteria and swelling, they lighten tooth stains. Wash the leaves first, crush them to make a paste and then apply to your teeth. Wait a minute and rinse.

## **Precautions**

If you try these natural teeth whitening remedies, carefully follow the instructions and ensure that the item is not too rough or too acidic because it may damage your enamel.

Also, stop smoking and limit the consumption of foods and beverages that can stain your teeth such as red wine, coffee, and tea.

Not all teeth respond to natural whitening. If they don't, consult a dentist who can help you with a solution. Severely stained or damaged teeth may not whiten. It will not be effective on crowns, filling, or veneers.

Be patient! Results won't appear overnight.

## Professional Teeth Whitening Options



Teeth discoloration is a common sight in many people, mainly because it is a natural part of life and several factors can cause it.

It's not always a lack of good oral hygiene. These factors include aging, drinking dark beverages habitually, smoking, and medications.

Some people are not self-conscious about it, but if you are conscious of your discolored teeth, there are different teeth whitening options to choose from.

There are professional whitening options and home treatments or remedies. Professional teeth whitening treatments are popular today. This may be in the dental surgery, or custom tray home whitening kits.

The whitening done by a dentist is where a whitening gel is applied to your teeth with care because it is a strong solution. The custom tray home whitening is the same but has a weaker solution gel and you will be the one to apply it.

### **Advantages of Professional Teeth Whitening**

- The procedures are supervised by a dental professional who will first examine your gums and teeth to ensure they are healthy and if your mouth contains dental crowns or veneers that will not be included in the treatment.
- Besides being thoroughly monitored, the treatments have a higher dose of bleaching gel than at-home whitening products but are safe and painless.
- They yield immediate visible results instead of several weeks, as delivered by custom home whitening because they have stronger doses.
- The results can last from 6 months to 3 years and it depends on your lifestyle and daily habits.

Here are a few of the options available to you.

### **Dental Teeth Whitening Treatment**

A dental surgeon will apply a whitening gel to your teeth. The whitening gel may contain carbamide peroxide or hydrogen peroxide as the bleaching ingredient.

Your gums will be protected from the chemicals of the whitening solution by a rubber cover or gel. Your teeth will have the solution applied and be fitted with a custom-made tray.

The applied solution will remain on your teeth for thirty minutes to one hour. When the active ingredient breaks down, the oxygen that gets into the enamel will make your teeth whiter.

It may be reapplied and once the desired level of whiteness has been reached, it will be time to rinse your teeth. Afterward, a fluoride treatment will be applied. Another visit may be scheduled to attain the desired result.

### **Professional 'Take-Home' Teeth Whitening Treatments**

Your dentist will make a custom-made tray or dental mouthguard and treat your teeth with a whitening gel on the first session. Then you will continue the succeeding treatments at your home like the clinic-based procedure above. You will be given a weaker solution gel at home, just to be safe.

### **Laser-Activated Whitening Treatment**

Your dentist will place gauze in your mouth to keep the teeth dry during the treatment. Your gums will be protected from the high dose of hydrogen peroxide solution. The solution will be applied to your teeth and the dentist will focus a laser or curing light on your teeth to activate the peroxide solution.

This procedure will lighten your teeth in half the time, compared to other whitening options. It can make your teeth five to six times whiter too.

### **Intense Teeth Bleaching**

This is a multi-stage procedure that is well known for whitening even the most stubborn stains such as are caused by prescription medications. Custom-made dental guards are fitted to your mouth.

They contain small amounts of carbamide peroxide or hydrogen peroxide solution that you will wear while sleeping, but they are comfortable and flexible.

Both will utilize slower absorption and oxygen release to maximize the whitening result. They will allow the oxygen to soak deeper into your teeth to remove stubborn stains.

This treatment is designed to be worn overnight for two consecutive weeks or depending on the recommendation of your dentist for a long-lasting effect.

### **Things to Avoid After Teeth Whitening Procedures**

- Dark-colored foods such as beets, black grapes, berries.
- High-pigmented beverages like red wine, soda, coffee, and tea.
- Tomato juice and sauce, yellow mustard, spaghetti.
- Smoking tobacco.

The results will last from 6 months to 3 years, depending on your eating and lifestyle habits. You can also use a custom-made tray and solution from your dentist at home, for maintenance.

The professional teeth whitening options listed above are effective and safe when applied by your dentist. They are long-lasting, compared to over-the-counter and prescription gels for home use. That makes them cost-effective too, even if they seem expensive at first.

If you are interested in having a whiter smile, consult your dentist first. They will know if your teeth are suitable for any procedure.

If you proceed, remember to maintain your whiter teeth by avoiding the things that cause teeth discoloration, and make proper oral hygiene a top priority.

## Dental Hygiene and Care for Healthy Teeth and Gums



Proper dental hygiene and daily oral care will benefit your teeth, mouth, and gums.

You can avoid oral problems such as bad breath, tooth decay, gingivitis, and periodontitis, which can eventually lead to tooth loss and/or irreparable damage to your gums.

Unfortunately, many people don't realize the importance of dental hygiene, in that a lack of dental hygiene poses risks to their overall health.

So, if you want to keep your natural teeth and a healthy body into your senior years, these oral health habits can prevent the growth of harmful oral bacteria that can cause you problems in more than your teeth.

### **Good Dental Hygiene and Care Checklist**

- Brush your teeth after every meal, or at least morning and night if that is not possible. Use a soft toothbrush and brush gently around your teeth and gums in a circular motion.

Make sure that your whole mouth, including the tongue, is covered with your toothbrush to get rid of residues on your tooth surface to reduce plaque and mouth odor.

- Replace your toothbrush after 3 to 4 months to ensure that your teeth will be cleaned properly.
- Use toothpaste with calcium and fluoride, and you can gargle a fluoride mouthwash afterward. They will strengthen your tooth enamel and protect against tooth decay.
- Use a mouthwash if you cannot brush your teeth after meals.
- Floss in between your teeth at least once daily, preferably in the evening. This will remove food particles and plaque in between your teeth that a toothbrush cannot remove. It will improve your oral health.
- Substitute unhealthy foods with a healthy balanced diet, one that is good for building strong teeth. Instead of high carbs and sugary foods, eat foods high in fiber and other nutrients needed for oral health such as calcium, magnesium, and phosphorus to prevent tooth decay.

Examples are fatty fish because it lessens the risk of tooth decay and green leafy veggies that are prebiotic and which healthy bacteria like to feed on.

Dark leafy veggies are also rich in minerals that will aid in the mineralization of your teeth to strengthen the enamel. Meanwhile, avoid highly acidic and processed foods because they have no essential nutrients.

Acidic fruits, coffee, all kinds of soda, and tea can destroy your tooth enamel. Their acidity may contribute to gum inflammation, tooth decay, and disruption of your oral health.

Avoid crackers because they turn into sugar that oral bacteria can feast on. Dried fruits are lacking in water and become caramelized.

- Supplement your daily diet with Vitamins A and C to develop healthy gums and ward off gum diseases. Also, ample amounts of citrus fruits, dairy products, and eggs assist good oral health.
- Drink more water after every meal and eat chewy fruits and veggies. Hydration is important to keep your body and your mouth healthy. It washes out food particles and removes the damaging effect of acidic and sticky foods and drinks from your mouth.

Water induces saliva, which has anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory attributes. It keeps your mouth clean by washing out the residues and acids created by bacteria.

- Avoid smoking.
- Have a professional dental check-up and cleaning every six months so that your dentist can examine your teeth and detect and remedy any dental problem early. This is to avoid expensive and painful treatments that will be needed if this dental problem becomes severe.

## **How Do You Know You Have Good Dental Hygiene And Care?**

During the routine check-ups, your dentist and hygienist can give you the right feedback on the general health of your mouth, teeth, and gums. In between dental visits you may know the state of your oral health by the following indications:

- You have no persistent foul-smelling breath.
- Your gums are constantly in the 'pink of health.'
- Your gums do not bleed or are not sensitive while brushing or flossing.
- Your teeth are clean and free from tooth decay, cavities, plaque, and tartar.
- Your teeth look clean and bright.

If you follow the above tips you will enjoy the benefits of a healthy mouth, gums, and teeth and look your best when you smile. Lastly, it will save you from having oral health problems and accompanying health complications.

Be orally mindful and you'll forever be grateful.

## Stop Receding Gums From Getting Worse



Healthy gums produce a healthy smile.

Act now to keep your healthy smile and stop your gums receding or getting any worse!

Receding gums or gingival recession is a gradual deterioration of your gum tissue, exposing more of your teeth and their roots. Because it is pulled back, you can see pockets form between your gums and teeth and this will allow bacteria to more easily grow and multiply.

If you ignore it, problems will arise such as tooth decay, loss of tissue and bone, and tooth loss.

## **What Causes Receding Gums?**

They say that in every problem there is a solution, but to know the right solution, you have to know first why your gums recede.

These are:

- Aging or family history that makes you prone to gum recession.
- Brushing your teeth too hard and using a hard-bristled toothbrush so it slowly erodes the soft tissue of your gums.
- Diabetes.
- Gum diseases such as gingivitis and periodontitis caused by a lack of good oral hygiene. The bacteria under your gum line will accumulate and cause swelling and will make your gums recede away from the plaque.
- Hormonal issues such as during menopause or pregnancy.
- Involuntary and consistent grinding of teeth and teeth clenching while sleeping, called bruxism.
- Injury to your gum tissue because of a dental procedure, fall or accident, engaging in contact sports, or from wearing partial or ill-fitted dentures.
- The plaque from your teeth cascaded and infected your gum line. This in turn will infect the soft tissue, cause it to swell and pull away from your teeth.

## **Signs You Have Receding Gums**

To confirm if you have receding gums and prevent them from getting worse, you need to consult your trusted dentist as soon as possible. However, here are the signs you can look for yourself.

- Your gums are visibly swollen and inflamed, and some teeth may feel loose.
- As the gums recede, more of the tooth is exposed, so your teeth look longer than when you were younger. Hence the term, 'long in the tooth.'
- You constantly have bad breath.
- Your teeth become sensitive to hot or cold food and drinks.

## Ways to Stop Gum Recession

Aside from family history or genetics, the other causes are thankfully remediable and treatable. One important thing to do is floss! Flossing is a great first step to prevent bacterial problems in the gums and maintain healthy teeth and gums.

There are medical, cosmetic, and natural remedies you can undertake to prevent receding gums from getting worse.

- Medical treatments and surgical techniques can add tissue to make your gums look healthier and to protect the exposed root from decaying. Your dentist or periodontist will determine which is the best option for you or if you are a candidate for one of these treatments.

They are administered painlessly with local anesthesia because some gums will be lifted to clean the root of your tooth. Then they will be stretched and repositioned over the exposed root.

- Cosmetic treatments like composite restoration, using pink porcelain, orthodontics, and use of removable gum veneers. Your dentist will cover the exposed root with a bonding compound, hide discoloration, close the gaps in between your teeth, reposition your teeth with braces, or will apply gum-colored veneers.
- Your dentist can give you a custom-made mouthguard if the recession is caused by teeth grinding and clenching of jaws. This is to balance the pressure and to protect your teeth.

You may also be referred to a temporomandibular joint (TMJ) specialist that has more expertise in preventing bruxism if it's difficult to control. Mouthguards can also be used if you play contact sports to protect against injury to your gums and teeth.

- Deep cleaning if you have excessive plaque formation below your gum line to remove the bacteria and stop gum recession. The dentist will use a scaling and planing tool for going below the gum's surface to scrape the plaque from your teeth.
- Replacing your ill-fitted dentures. Since our gums and jaw change their shape while aging, your dentist should replace or adjust them to avoid continuous rubbing on your gums.
- Have a regular dental check-up every six months. Early detection and treatment can prevent gum recession from progressing.
- Drink more water to stay hydrated and prevent plaque build-up.
- Practice good oral hygiene by brushing your teeth gently and thoroughly. Do it twice or thrice daily with a soft-bristled toothbrush, an electric one if possible, and in a circular motion. Floss once a day. Use a prescription mouthwash afterward.
- Use a toothpaste that contains fluoride and not a teeth whitener. Whitening toothpaste contains gum irritants like hydrogen peroxide that if used daily may cause more gum recession. You can also choose a toothpaste made to diminish plaque and promote healthy gums.
- Maintain a balanced diet.
- Natural options include using turmeric gel to prevent plaque formation, green tea that helps get rid of gum diseases, and eucalyptus extract chewing gum that protects oral health and stops gums from receding.

Keep in touch with your dentist regularly to have personalized advice and treatment about your teeth and gum condition. Remember, healthy gums produce a healthy smile. Act now to stop your receding gums from getting any worse.

## Dental Health Can Affect Your Overall Health



Lack of good oral hygiene contributes to dental health problems. These dental problems may increase your risk of having chronic diseases. According to studies, fifty percent of the world's populace are experiencing oral diseases.

That's a lot of people! Therefore, it is vital to understand how your overall health can be at risk if you have dental health issues.

## **Health Conditions May be Affected By Your Dental Health**

Just like a house where the door is your main entry, your mouth is the main access point for bacteria, both harmless and harmful. Without proper oral hygiene, harmful bacteria will grow in abundance and cause oral infections that will travel to other parts of your body.

That's why it will affect not only your oral health but your body's overall health as well.

The following are some health conditions or progressive disorders and how they are affected by your dental health and vice versa.

### ***Alzheimer's Disease***

This is a common cause of dementia or the progressive decline in a person's memory. Successive studies found that the bacteria *P.gingivalis* that causes gum disease can migrate from your mouth to your brain and increase your risk of developing Alzheimer's.

### ***Blood Disorders***

These can make your gums more prone to bleeding or becoming pale if you have gum disease. Any dental problem should be properly taken care of to prevent excessive bleeding.

### ***Eating Disorders - Bulimia and Anorexia***

These are eating disorders that can cause permanent damage to your gums, teeth, and mouth. Important nutrients such as vitamin B, calcium, and iron boost your oral health.

If they are lacking in your diet, your gums and the soft tissues in your mouth may easily bleed. You can have gum disease, tooth decay, and a severely dry mouth because your salivary glands may swell.

The accompanying stomach acid caused by frequent vomiting will flow on your teeth and damage your enamel, change their color, length, and shape. They will also become brittle, translucent, and sensitive to hot and cold foods and drinks.

### ***Celiac and Crohn's Disease***

These are autoimmune diseases that may both cause canker sores because they affect the gastrointestinal tract starting from the mouth. This may be because of an allergic reaction to certain bacteria in your mouth. People with these diseases have an increased incidence of tooth decay and having cavities.

### ***Diabetes***

Diabetes can cause persistent and severe dental problems like gum disease or tooth loss because the body's resistance to bacteria is weakened. Periodontitis, a severe gum disease, can also make it very hard for diabetic people to control their blood sugar levels.

### ***Heart Disease***

Endocarditis is an inflammation of your heart's inner lining that is usually caused by bacteria. Poor dental hygiene can cause bacteria to travel through your bloodstream and increase your chance of having this condition and other life-threatening heart problems like clogged arteries and stroke.

### ***Obesity***

Excessive accumulation of fat presents a risk to your dental health, especially from periodontal disease. The fat cells create many chemical stimuli and hormones that cause inflammation in your body and will lead to decreased immunity.

### ***Respiratory Problems***

Problems such as pneumonia may increase if you have poor oral health because the bacteria in your mouth may travel to your lungs and multiply.

### ***Pregnancy Complications***

Premature delivery and low birth weight may significantly increase because of poor dental hygiene. If your teeth and gums are not healthy, you are at risk of developing periodontal disease.

Many studies on various health issues show that poor dental health can affect your overall health. However, most of these problems can be prevented by having regular check-ups with your dentist and rigorously practicing proper oral care.

Now is the time to stop harmful bacteria from thriving in your mouth and spreading to other parts of your body.

## Conclusion

Certainly, there are aspects of dental health and wellness that are, in varying degrees, beyond our control. This is true of most aspects of our health.

By the same token, there is much we can do, and plenty we shouldn't do to promote the health of our teeth and gums.

It should be obvious that a theme has emerged in common with most other aspects of our health – that being our diet. Yet again, whereas in the past some dental problems were caused by a lack of proper nutrition, much of the problem today is an excess of *improper* nutrition.

The biggest single culprit is high-GI simple carbs, especially sugars, that oral bacteria thrive on. Combined with lax dental hygiene, this sets up an environment that your teeth and gums are defenseless against.

However, you have the knowledge and the ability to take control of your dental wellbeing. Mostly it is a matter of prioritizing the health of your mouth, teeth and gums above satisfying your immediate food cravings.

Of course, proper dental hygiene is very important, and seeing a dentist regularly is always a good thing, for maintenance and prevention of future problems.