

## Symptoms of gum disease

**Healthy gums should be pink, firm and keep your teeth securely in place. Your gums should not bleed when you touch or brush them.**

Gum disease is not always painful and you may be unaware you have it. This is why it is important to have regular appointments with your dentist and Hygienist.

## Early symptoms

The initial symptoms of gum disease can include:

- red and swollen gums
- bleeding gums after brushing or flossing your teeth

This stage of gum disease is called gingivitis.

## Advanced symptoms

If gingivitis is untreated, the tissues and bone that support the teeth can also become affected. This is known as periodontitis.

Symptoms of periodontitis can include:

- bad breath (halitosis)
- an unpleasant taste in your mouth
- loose teeth that can make eating difficult
- gum abscess's

## When to see a dentist

You should make an appointment to see your dentist if you think you may have gum disease

## Treating gum disease

**The best way to treat gum disease is to practice good oral hygiene, although additional dental and medical treatments can be necessary.**

## Oral hygiene

Good oral hygiene involves:

- brushing your teeth for 2-3 minutes twice a day (morning and night), preferably with an electric toothbrush
- using toothpaste that contains fluoride
- flossing your teeth daily
- not smoking
- regularly visiting your dentist (at least once every year, but more frequently if possible)

## Mouthwash

\*Antiseptic mouthwashes that contain chlorhexidine are available over the counter from pharmacies, although there is some debate about whether using mouthwash is necessary for people with healthy gums.

\*Your dentist may recommend using mouthwash if it helps control the build-up of plaque (the substance that forms when bacteria collects on the surface of your teeth). Your dentist will be able to advise you about which type of mouthwash is most suitable and how to use it.

\*Chlorhexidine mouthwash can stain your teeth brown if you use it regularly. Rinse your mouth

thoroughly between brushing your teeth and using a chlorhexidine mouthwash because some ingredients in toothpaste can prevent the mouthwash working.

## Dental treatments

Some of the dental treatments described below may also be recommended if you have gum disease.

### \* Scale and polish/Hygienist

-To remove plaque and tartar (hardened plaque) that can build up on your teeth, your dentist may suggest that you have your teeth scaled and polished/Hygienist. This is a "professional clean" usually carried out at your dental surgery by a **dentist or dental hygienist.**

-The **dentist or dental hygienist** will scrape away plaque and tartar from your teeth using special instruments and polish your teeth to remove marks or stains if required. If a lot of plaque or tartar has built up, you may need to have more than one scale and polish.

-The price of a scale and polish can vary depending on what needs to be carried out, so ask your dental hygienist how much it will cost beforehand. NHS dental treatment costs £23.80 for basic check-up (band 1) and £65.20 for more advanced treatment (band 2). Alternatively you may be offered a private **hygiene appointment for £75.00.**

**There is a minimum late cancellation charge of £50.00 and fail to attend charge of £75.00 on Hygiene appointments**

### \* Root planing

-In some cases of gum disease, root planing (debridement) may be required. This is a deep clean under the gums that gets rid of bacteria from the roots of your teeth.

-Before having the treatment, you may need to have a local anaesthetic (painkilling medication) to numb the area. You may experience some pain and discomfort for up to 48 hours after having root planing.

### \* Further treatment

-If you have severe gum disease, you may need further treatment, such as periodontal surgery. In some cases, it is necessary to remove the affected tooth. Your dentist will be able to tell you about the procedure needed and how it is carried out. If necessary, they can refer you to a specialist. -If you are having surgery or root planing, you may be given antibiotics (to treat infections). Your dentist will tell you whether this is necessary.

### Antibiotics

\*Treatment with Antibiotics such as metronidazole or amoxicillin may be recommended. You will usually have to take these for several days.

\*Amoxicillin is not suitable for people allergic to penicillin. It can also cause the contraceptive pill to fail, so women who are on the pill should use an additional form of contraception while taking amoxicillin and for seven days afterwards.

\*Metronidazole can react with alcohol, causing you to feel very unwell. You should therefore not drink alcohol while you are taking metronidazole and for 48 hours after you finish the course of treatment.

\*Other side effects of metronidazole and amoxicillin can include nausea (feeling sick), vomiting and diarrhoea.

### Painkillers

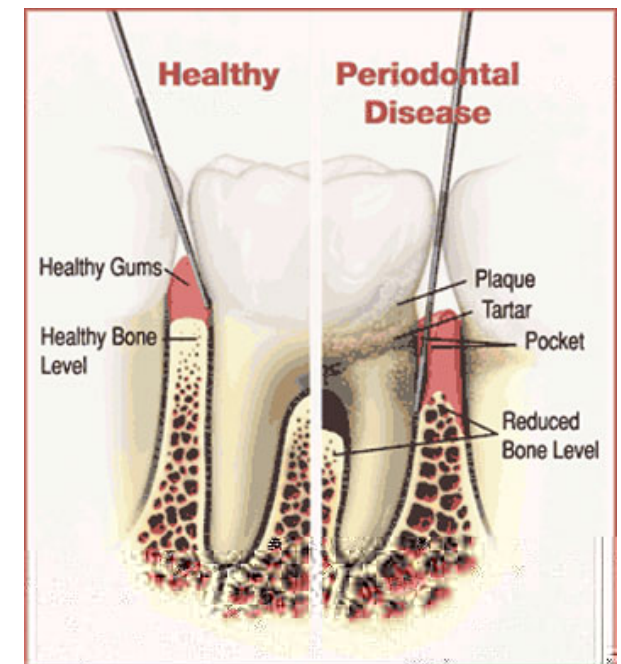
Paracetamol and Ibuprofen are the most commonly prescribed painkillers. They are also available over the counter from pharmacies. They may help reduce pain and discomfort caused by ulcers.

However, Paracetamol and ibuprofen are not suitable for everyone, so read the manufacturer's instructions before taking them.

### Mouthwash

Mouthwash that contains chlorhexidine or hydrogen peroxide may be prescribed. Some chlorhexidine mouthwashes are also available over the counter, though they may not be as effective as a hydrogen peroxide mouthwash. You should always read the instructions before using mouthwash. Some types may need to be diluted in water before they are taken.

# Gum Disease and benefits of seeing a Hygienist



**Book Your Hygiene Appointment NOW**

**01424 210346**