

Periodontal Disease

Periodontal disease (or gum disease) is a common problem which can affect many people over time. It affects the gums, bone and supporting structures of the teeth and is a major factor in **premature tooth loss**.

Essentially these supporting structures are gradually destroyed over time, therefore robbing the teeth of their foundations, causing the teeth to loosen and eventually, if at the late stage of the disease, can also cause the teeth to fall out.



Causes

- Smoking

Smoking is a well known factor in causing periodontal disease. Heavy smokers are **six** times more likely to develop the disease than non-smokers. Even if you smoke under 10/day you are **three** times more likely to develop it than a non-smoker

- Poor oral hygiene

Brushing twice a day and cleaning between your teeth once a day (with dental floss or inter-dental brushes) is essential in preventing and combating the progression of periodontal disease. Most people brush twice daily but a lot of people don't clean between their teeth and this is therefore the **most common site** in the development in the disease.

- Genetic factors

Periodontal disease can run in the family and can progress fairly rapidly in these individuals. It is essential that you **give up smoking** and concentrate on keeping your teeth as clean as possible to slow down the progression of the problem.

Treatment and Prevention

Prevention is the first step in treatment and combating the factors highlighted above is essential. The first thing if you are a smoker (light or heavy) is to **stop smoking**. Keeping your teeth as clean as possible by **brushing twice daily** and **cleaning between your teeth once daily** will help fight the disease.

It is also essential to see a **hygienist** regularly for professional cleaning in the hard-to-reach areas we cannot keep clean ourselves. Your dentist may recommend you see the hygienist at either 3, 4 or 6 monthly intervals. In more severe cases you may be advised to see our in-house **Periodontist**, who is a specialist in this field and will deep clean the gums and teeth to help effectively combat the disease.