



Hot Topics

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STOPPING PERIODONTAL DISEASE

Has your dentist referred you to a periodontist to care for your gum disease? According to the American Academy of Periodontology, gingivitis and the more serious periodontitis can be caused by smoking, genetics, pregnancy, puberty, stress, medications including oral contraceptives, anti-depressants and heart medications, clenching/grinding teeth, diabetes, poor nutrition and immune system diseases.

Periodontal disease is caused by the bacteria in plaque. It begins by causing the gums to become inflamed. Gingivitis is the mildest form of periodontal disease and is characterized by red, swollen or bleeding gums and is reversible with home and professional care. Periodontitis is the more severe version of the disease and can lead to the destruction of tissue and bone and eventually tooth loss. The process can have surprisingly mild symptoms.

If your dentist has found periodontal disease, he or she may recommend that you visit a gum specialist to treat your condition. You may require a form of deep cleaning known as scaling and root planing. This removes hard deposits and infection from below the gum and cleans the root surfaces. This is the most conservative form of treatment and is usually very effective. Antibiotics may also be placed in areas with severe infection. For advanced cases, surgery may be necessary. (Quality Dentistry).

Flossing is the most effective way to prevent periodontal disease at home, and should be done daily. Regular visits to the dentist will help catch the disease before it advances. Periodontal disease should be taken quite seriously because, untreated, it can lead to tooth loss.
