

# Gum Health establishing good gum and bone health

This information sheet has been designed to inform you of the treatment that has been proposed in your individual case. Please take the time to read the information and please do not hesitate to ask if you any queries.

**Dr Thai has recommended a Dental Hygiene or 'Cleaning' visit as the first step of your dental treatment because you are showing one or more of the signs of gum disease:**

- Build up of plaque and/or tartar
- Swollen or inflamed gums
- Bleeding gums
- Receding gums
- Mobile or loose teeth
- Infection or gum abscess
- Persistent bad breath

## What is Gum Disease?

Periodontal or "Gum" disease affects the gum and bone surrounding the teeth. The major cause is the build up of plaque and hardened plaque which is called Tartar. Plaque is a colourless, sticky film of bacteria which forms on teeth but which can be easily removed with effective brushing and flossing daily. Tartar can only be removed by professional cleaning.

## Gingivitis

Gingivitis, a mild form of gum disease is reversible. Regular professional cleaning removes this initial infection and effective home care can prevent it.

## Moderate to Severe Periodontitis

When plaque builds up near the gum line, it produces toxins which cause an infection. If the plaque is not removed it hardens into a hard deposit (tartar or calculus) which can't be removed with a toothbrush or floss. The tartar then attracts more plaque to the area.

Left untreated, the tartar that has built up under the gum line forms a 'pocket' where it has destroyed the bone. More plaque builds up in this pocket causing a deeper infection. Without treatment to remove this build up and infection, the pocket and bone loss will become so deep that the tooth will loosen and eventually be lost.

In advanced cases, you may be referred to a Specialist **Periodontist** for treatment and management.

## Why is so important to have professional Cleaning prior to starting dental treatment?

Most modern dental treatment using bonding techniques relies on the absence of moisture to prevent contamination and therefore, provide a longer lasting restoration.

When gum disease is present, often gums are swollen or 'overgrown', bleed easily and profusely and the teeth are covered in plaque or hardened tartar. This not only makes the dental treatment harder to perform, it can often take longer and therefore cost more than estimated or give a less than ideal result.

Ensuring the gums are in good health from the start and stay healthy, allows us to provide quality, longer lasting dental restorations.

## The treatment appointment will include:

1. Assessment of the health of your gums and bone including charting to determine the site and extent of gum disease and bone loss.
2. Removal of plaque and calculus and scaling and root planing to remove plaque and calculus on teeth surfaces below the gum line
3. Polishing and removal of surface stains from teeth, polishing existing restorations
4. Application of clinical strength fluoride and desensitising agents
5. Dental health education for optimal home care and prescription of home care aids such as speciality brushes, flosses or rinses
6. Dietary counselling and analysis if required

Depending on the level of your gum disease, the amount of build up to be removed, number of visits required and the services completed, your appointment may take from 45 minutes to one and a half hours. The fee for your treatment is outlined in your Treatment Plan and Fee Estimate.