

Periodontics: Healthy Gums for a Happy Smile

Gum disease is a lot more common than most people think – in part because the symptoms are not always obvious at first. Fortunately, DentalWorks affiliated practices offer a number of options to effectively prevent, detect, and treat this disease.

A chronic infection caused by an accumulation of plaque around the gum line, periodontal or gum disease can lead to everything from persistent bad breath to far more serious problems like the loss of your teeth. It can even affect your overall health and well-being, leaving you vulnerable to diabetes and heart disease. While there are a number of symptoms commonly associated with periodontal disease, sometimes the warning signs are not readily apparent until it's too late. That's why it's important to have your gums checked once every three to six months as part of a comprehensive dental exam.

If periodontal disease is detected and diagnosed in its initial stages, dentists can remove any buildup above and below your gum line in a process known as scaling. However, if the disease has progressed to the point where more of your teeth's roots are exposed, root planing may be called for. It's similar to scaling, but since roots are particularly sensitive, local anesthesia is required. Dentists may also provide antibiotics to kill the bacteria and stop the infection from spreading.

Left unchecked, periodontal disease can weaken or even destroy the bones that support your teeth. DentalWorks affiliated dentists can perform a flap procedure to clean the roots of your teeth while repairing and reshaping the bone. Depending on the extent of the damage, they may need to graft new bone to augment or replace the missing bone. In extreme cases, loose or severely damaged teeth may need to be extracted.

DentalWorks affiliated dentists will carefully assess your situation and consult with you before making any recommendations.

To learn more about gum disease, visit the following websites:

- [American Academy of Periodontology](#)
- [Academy of General Dentistry](#)
- [American Dental Association](#)