

Periodontal Disease

Department of Orthodontics and Restorative Dentistry
Information for Patients



University Hospitals of Leicester **NHS**
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Caring at its best

What is Periodontal Disease (Gum Disease)?

Periodontal disease is an inflammatory condition affecting the tissues that surround and support the teeth. Periodontal disease leads to pocket formation and bone loss. If untreated, periodontal disease can lead to loosening and loss of teeth.

Signs of gum disease include:

- Red or purple gums
- Swollen or Bleeding gums
- Mobile or migrated teeth
- Gum recession
- Bad breath

Gum disease may be present in the absence of these signs.

Risk Factors include:

- Plaque and calculus
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Genetic predisposition

Obesity, poor nutrition and stress have also been suggested as risk factors.

Why is treatment important?

Treatment of periodontal disease can help you retain your teeth for longer. As the inflammation around your teeth resolves, your gums will appear healthier, bleeding should stop and tooth mobility may improve.

There is also increasing evidence that treatment of periodontal disease can improve your general health. For example, in diabetic patients, good control of periodontal disease can help control blood sugar levels.

What can I do to help my gums?

Good oral hygiene is the most important factor in ensuring a good outcome with periodontal treatment. You should brush your teeth with a fluoride containing toothpaste for three minutes, twice daily. When you brush your teeth you must ensure you also brush the gum margin. This prevents plaque building up in this area.

Bleeding gums is a sign that your gums are not clean enough. If good cleaning is maintained the gums should stop bleeding within two weeks.

It is also important to use interdental brushes (such as TePe brushes) to clean between your teeth every day. Interdental brushes get to the areas your toothbrush cannot reach. You should select interdental brushes that fit snugly between your teeth. You are likely to need a selection of interdental brushes to use throughout your mouth. These brushes can be used horizontally and vertically. Your dentist or dental hygienist can help you select appropriate sizes.

What can I do to help my gums? (continued)

Cleaning aids to help maintain good oral hygiene include interdental brushes.



Smoking reduces the blood supply to the gums and is one of the main risk factors for periodontal disease. Stopping smoking will benefit your gums and your general health. Patients who continue to smoke are unlikely to see a positive treatment outcome, even if they have excellent oral hygiene.

Treatment for Periodontal Disease

1) Scaling and Polishing

This is the removal of plaque, calculus and debris from the tooth surface above the gum line. This is carried out using ultrasonic and hand instruments by a dental professional.

Scaling can make the teeth sensitive. It is possible to improve this by the topical application of fluoride toothpaste. If your teeth are sensitive following scaling place a small amount of toothpaste on your finger and rub it into the roots of the sensitive teeth, spit out the extra and do not rinse your mouth out. If you do this over several months a barrier will form and your teeth will become harder and less sensitive.

2) Root Surface Debridement

This is the removal of plaque, calculus and debris from the root surface below the gum line. This is carried out using ultrasonic and hand instruments by a dental professional. This procedure can take up to two hours (often over two visits) and usually requires local anaesthetic to ensure adequate cleaning.

Local anaesthesia lasts a few hours and care should be taken during this time. Be particularly careful when drinking and eating whilst you are numb as you can bite your lips and cheeks. Extremely hot and cold foods should be avoided whilst you are numb as these can burn your mouth.

These before and after pictures show the improvements that can be achieved with good oral hygiene and root surface debridement:



3) Periodontal Surgery

If pocketing remains following root surface debridement periodontal surgery may be undertaken. This allows direct access to the root surface for cleaning and repositioning of the gum margin to eliminate pocketing. Periodontal surgery is undertaken under local anaesthetic in the dental surgery. Periodontal surgery is not normally considered unless oral hygiene is excellent and thorough root surface debridement has been undertaken.

Who will undertake my treatment?

We will usually advise that any recommended treatment is provided by your General Dental Practitioner.

If periodontal disease is very severe or complicated by medication or medical factors we may provide treatment within the Department.

Long Term Care

Once periodontal treatment has been completed you need to see your General Dental Practitioner on a regular basis (usually every three months) so they can monitor the health of your gums. Your dentist should check that you are cleaning your teeth properly and undertake regular scaling and root surface debridement as required.



Today's research is tomorrow's care

We all benefit from research. Leicester's Hospitals is a research active Trust so you may find that research is happening when you visit the hospital or your clinic.

If you are interested in finding out how you can become involved in a clinical trial or to find out more about taking part in research, please speak to your clinician or GP.

If you would like this information in another language or format, please contact the service equality manager on 0116 250 2959

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على هذه المعلومات في شكل أو لغة أخرى، يرجى الاتصال مع مدير الخدمة للمساواة في 0116 250 2959.

আপনি যদি এই লিফলেটের অনুবাদ - লিখিত বা অডিও টেপ'এ চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে সার্ভিস ইকুয়ালিটি ম্যানেজার ডেভ বেকার'এর সাথে 0116 250 2959 নাম্বারে যোগাযোগ করুন।

如果您想用另一种语言或格式来显示本资讯，请致电 0116 250 2959 联系“服务平等化经理” (Service Equality Manager)。

જો તમને આ પત્રછાનું લેખિત અથવા ટેપ ઉપર ભાષાંતર જોઈતું હોય તો મહેરબાની કરી સર્વિસ ઇકુઅલિટી મેનેજરનો 0116 250 2959 ઉપર સંપર્ક કરો.

यदि आप को इस लीफलेट का लिखती या टेप पर अनुवाद चाहिए तो कृपया डेव बेकर, सर्विस इक्वालिटी मैनेजर से 0116 250 2959 पर सम्पर्क कीजिए।

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać niniejsze informacje w tłumaczeniu na inny język lub w innym formacie, prosimy skontaktować się z Menedżerem ds. równości w dostępie do usług (Service Equality Manager) pod numerem telefonu 0116 250 2959.

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਲੀਫਲੈਟ ਦਾ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਟੇਪ ਕੀਤਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਡੇਵ ਬੇਕਰ, ਸਰਵਿਸ ਇਕੁਅਲਿਟੀ ਮੈਨੇਜਰ ਨਾਲ 0116 250 2959 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Ak by ste chceli dostať túto informáciu v inom jazyku, alebo formáte, kontaktujte prosím manažéra rovnosti služieb na tel. číslo 0116 250 2959.

Haddaad rabto warqadan oo turjuman oo ku duuban cajalad ama qoraal ah fadlan la xirii, Maamulaha Adeegga Sinaanta 0116 250 2959.