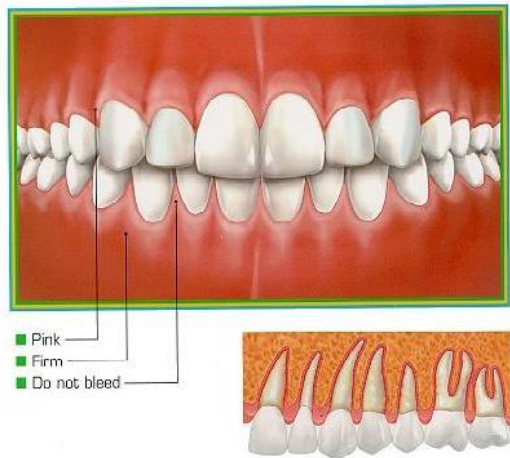


Brian and Ian routinely screen for periodontal disease at every regular check-up appointment and, under a jointly agreed treatment plan our hygienists Helen and Wendy work alongside the dentists to provide a total care package for maintaining and improving your oral health.

In a healthy mouth, gums are pink and do not bleed on toothbrushing. They are firm and cannot be easily separated from teeth.

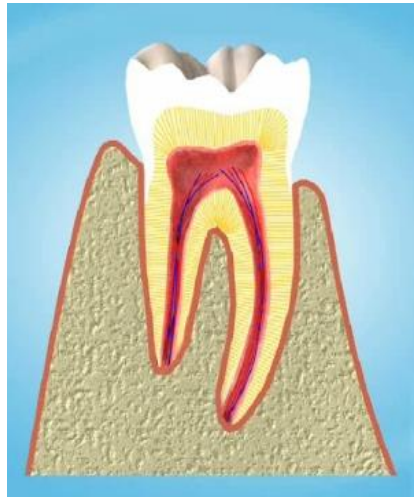
HEALTHY GUMS



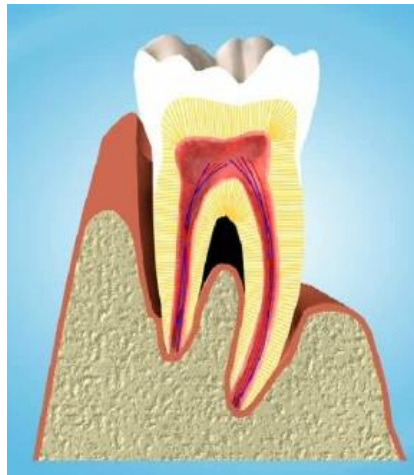
What is gum disease?

Our saliva contains millions of bacteria which stick to the tooth surface and quickly multiply to form layers of plaque. If the plaque is allowed to build up, the toxins produced by the bacteria inflame the gums. Often the gums bleed when they are brushed. This swelling and redness of the gums is the first stage of periodontal disease called **gingivitis**.

Over a period of time, the bacteria can spread below the gum level, forming “pockets” between the tooth and gum. As the pockets get deeper, the bacteria start to destroy the underlying bone which holds the tooth in place. As the disease progresses, gums shrink and teeth may loosen as the bone underneath is destroyed. This is called **periodontitis** and requires specialist treatment from the dentist and hygienist.



Healthy teeth and gum with no bone loss



Advanced periodontitis

Treatment of gum disease

The treatment of gum disease is a joint undertaking between ourselves and you.

We carry out a full gum assessment as part of your routine dental treatment to determine how healthy the gums are. We do this by measuring the depth of the pockets around each tooth.



Routine assessment of periodontal disease

Our hygienists Helen and Wendy can remove any plaque that has formed above and below the gum line and remove any hard calculus (tartar). This hard deposit provides a good surface for the bacteria to grow on and can support the progression of the periodontal disease process. Since calculus resists normal brushing it needs to be professionally removed.

Where pockets have formed the roots and teeth can be cleaned and smoothed to allow the gum to reattach and the swelling to subside. This is called **scaling and root surface debridement**.

Our Hygienists or one of our Oral Health Educators in our Dental Health Suite will then show you the most effective ways of brushing your teeth and gums to keep them healthy and to reduce the build-up of plaque at the gum margins and to prevent any further development of gum disease.

This may include a combination of brushing, flossing, using specially designed inter-dental brushes to clean in-between the teeth and the use of a mouthwash.

Periodontal disease is never cured but as long as you keep up the oral hygiene routine we recommend at home, any further loss of bone will be very slow and it may stop altogether. However, you must make sure that you effectively remove the plaque deposits every day and attend your regular check-ups with the dentist and hygienist.



Advanced periodontitis

If you would like to know more about the causes or treatment of periodontal disease, please do not hesitate to ask any member of the dental team.

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BDA Good Practice
Member

Periodontal (Gum) Disease & Its Treatment

The practice ethos has always been to provide good dental health through preventive dentistry. This involves educating our patients in order to maintain good dental health and prevent dental disease occurring.

For many years, patients may have regarded the “scale and polish” by the hygienist as nothing more than a “scrape and clean up”.

In fact, the Hygienist’s role within the dental profession is the assessment, treatment and monitoring of periodontal disease (often referred to as gum disease), which affects over 90% of the British adult population, and results in more teeth being lost than through tooth decay.

Periodontal disease can often go unnoticed until it is quite advanced, as there is no pain associated with the early stages, and the warning symptoms are sometimes ignored.