

## Brief Note on Periodontitis

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### DESCRIPTION

Gum disease, often known as periodontitis, is a dangerous inflammation of the gums. Bacteria that have been allowed to accumulate on teeth and gums cause it. "Periodontitis" is a term that implies "infection surrounding the tooth." Bacteria and other microorganisms adhere to the surface of the tooth and multiply in the pockets surrounding it. When the immune system reacts, toxins are generated, causing inflammation. If periodontitis is not treated, it can lead to tooth loss. As periodontitis progresses, it increases the risk of stroke, heart attack, and bone deterioration.

### Causes of periodontitis

Periodontitis is most commonly caused by poor tooth hygiene. When a person fails to brush his or her teeth and clean the hard-to-reach areas of the mouth, the following occurs:

- When bacteria in the mouth proliferate, a material called dental plaque forms.
- If plaque is not eliminated by brushing, bacteria will deposit minerals within the plaque over time, forming tartar, which will encourage more bacterial development near the root of the tooth.
- The body's immune response to this bacterial growth will result in gum inflammation.

Smoking, type 2 diabetes, obesity, hormonal changes in women, HIV, leukaemia, poor diet, and vitamin C deficiency are all variables that can increase a person's risk of periodontitis.

### Symptoms of periodontitis

Gingivitis, or gum inflammation, is always the first sign of periodontitis. One of the first indicators is the gums bleeding when brushing. The gums may appear red and swollen, and a discolored film of bacterial plaque on the teeth may be visible. If plaque is not eliminated by brushing and flossing, it will become "mineralized," changing into hard deposits known as calculus or tartar, which cannot be removed with a toothbrush.

Gingivitis can progress to periodontitis, a more dangerous form of gum disease, if left untreated. Often, there are no clear indicators to alarm you, but you may notice changes such as:

- Increased gum bleeding, which can be triggered by tooth brushing or eating, or it might happen on its own.
- Bad breath.
- Teeth appear "longer" (receding gums).

Gum bleeding may be less evident in smokers. This is due to nicotine's influence on blood vessels, which means that the disease's progression may be masked.

### Diagnosis

Periodontitis is usually diagnosed by a dentist based on the signs and symptoms as well as a physical examination. A periodontal probe will most likely be inserted adjacent to the tooth, under the gum line. The probe should not go below the gum line if the tooth is healthy. The probe will reach deeper beneath the gum line in situations of periodontitis. The dentist will take measurements to see how far it extends. An X-ray can be used to determine the health of the jaw bone and teeth.

### Treatment

Treatment might be provided by a periodontist, dentist, or dental hygienist. The goal of periodontitis treatment is to thoroughly clean the pockets around teeth and avoid bone damage.

**Non-surgical procedures:** If periodontitis isn't severe, less invasive procedures such as scaling and root planing may be used.

**Surgical treatments:** If a person has advanced periodontitis, treatment may require dental surgery, such as

- Flap surgery (pocket reduction surgery).
- Soft tissue grafts.
- Bone grafting.
- Guided tissue regeneration.
- Tissue-stimulating proteins.

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