

## **Periodontal Disease**

### **What is Periodontal Disease?**

Periodontal (gum) disease is an infection and inflammatory disease which destroys the gum tissues and supporting bone around your teeth. Periodontal disease affects 3 out of 4 adults and is the leading cause of adult tooth loss. Evidence now links gum disease to a variety of health concerns including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, pregnancy complications and other degenerative/inflammatory diseases that are life threatening.

In the early stages of periodontal disease there is little, if any pain; therefore you may not notice the gradual onset of inflammation and occasional bleeding. With thorough removal, toxins from plaque cause the disease process to continue. Periodontal disease is progressive and if left untreated, may result in extensive bone destruction and possible tooth loss. There is no cure for periodontal disease; it can only be managed and controlled. If diagnosed in the early stages, gingivitis can be treated and reversed.

## **Soft Tissue Management**

### **What is Soft Tissue Management?**

Soft tissue management is an individual plan to eliminate infection of the gums and root surfaces. An appropriate plan will be chosen by one of the doctors, your hygienist, and you. The hygienist will perform the treatments to help eliminate infection, make recommendations to help you more effectively clean your teeth daily, and guide you through the efforts necessary to achieve and maintain oral health.

### **What is Root Planing?**

Root planing is the treatment of diseased root surfaces below the gumline. A routine prophylaxis (cleaning) emphasizes cleaning the teeth above the gum line in a generally healthy mouth. Root planing focuses on eliminating tartar and plaque below the gumline and detoxifying the root surfaces where the disease resides. Obtaining smooth roots and flushing out the pockets allows for healthy re-attachment of the gums to the root surfaces and decreased pocket depths.

### **What do we hope to accomplish with Soft Tissue Management?**

- Gums that do not bleed...Healthy gums do not bleed!
- Fresh breath and taste
- Gums that are not red, swollen, or tender
- Education on how to effectively maintain good oral hygiene

- Reduce pocket depths
- Control of periodontal disease

**What do we need from you, the patient, to make this treatment a success?**

- Completion of the periodontal therapy prescribed by your dentist and hygienist
- A thorough cleaning of all tooth surfaces at least two times a day
- Maintenance of regular re-care visits

### **3-Month Periodontal Recare Visit**

Your soft tissue management program is a non-surgical approach to control periodontal disease. Unfortunately there is no known cure for the disease, but with individualized treatment modalities, there are very high rates of success in its management and control.

The bacteria that cause periodontal disease re-establish within the first 3 months after treatment. A 3 month re-care visit is critically timed to disrupt this bacteria in pockets greater than 4 millimeters in order to disable the destructive process at its critical stage. This critical stage is when the bacteria and their toxins do the most harm to supporting structures, namely, the periodontal attachment.

For patients with adult periodontitis, supportive 3 month re-care is a requirement for successful therapy. Waiting longer than 3 months for re-care may result in advanced inflammation, irreversible damage and may require anesthesia to eliminate discomfort when treating. Your re-care interval will be determined by your hygienist and dentist to best manage your oral health.\*

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Signature

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Date

\*American Dental Association, 2003