

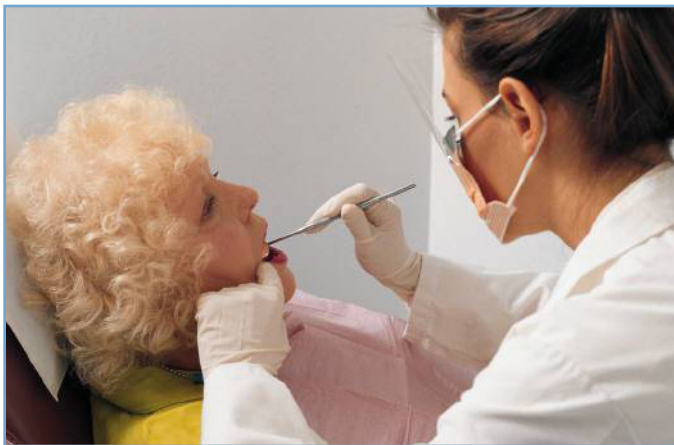
# The Facts on Periodontal Disease

Periodontal diseases are infections caused by germs that destroy the fibers and bones that support teeth.

**Gingivitis** - This is an infection of the gums and is the mildest form of periodontal disease. It is caused by the buildup of plaque (germs) along the tooth gumline and is reversible.

**Periodontitis** - When gingivitis is not treated, plaque will build up below the gumline. Toxins from plaque destroy the fibers and bones that support the teeth. If periodontitis is not treated, teeth may be lost.

**Other Health Issues** - Research has shown a link between periodontal disease and diabetes, heart disease and stroke, respiratory diseases, and pregnancy problems. Therefore, treating periodontal disease may also help to manage other health conditions.



Your dentist can help you fight periodontal disease.

## Do I Have Periodontal Disease?

Symptoms to look for include:

- Red, swollen, or tender gums.
- Bleeding while you brush, floss, or eat hard foods.
- Gums that are receding or are pulling away from the teeth. This will cause the teeth to look longer than normal.
- Loose or separating teeth.
- Pus between your gums and teeth.
- Sores in your mouth.
- Persistent bad breath.
- A change in the way your teeth fit together when you bite.
- A change in the fit of partial dentures.
- Or there may be no outward symptoms of the disease. Only a dentist can diagnose periodontal disease. Be sure to get regular checkups that include a periodontal exam.

## Possible Contributing Factors for Periodontal Disease:

Poor oral hygiene • Smoking and tobacco use • Genetics • Female hormones • Stress • Medications • Diabetes