

stDental Times

What is Gum Disease?

Dental plaque is a soft, sticky film of bacteria that forms on the surface of your teeth, that if not removed daily by brushing and flossing can harden into tartar and lead to an infection of the tissues surrounding and supporting the teeth. If un-

attended, this could lead to periodontitis – an advanced stage of gum disease resulting in serious damage to the gums and bone that support the teeth.

The good news is that with proper care, gum disease can almost always be prevented. Even if it does start, it can usually be treated or even reversed if we catch it in the early stages.

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Did you know?

Gum disease is associated with heart disease, stroke, pneumonia, pre-term births, low-birth weight babies, osteopenia, osteoporosis and diabetes.

The problem with gum disease (or periodontal disease) is that it usually develops without any warning signs and without causing any pain, so

What to Do During Dental Emergency!

School's out and summer is here! Nice weather lures children to outdoor activities. Yet, parents may not realize some hidden dangers of certain summer activities. In the summer, accidents that cause tooth injuries occur mostly from falling off playground swings, diving into shallow pools, baseball, skateboarding, in-line skating and bicycling.

Statistics don't lie:

- 5 million teeth are knocked out each year.
- For ages 0-4, playground injuries to the brain and face account for nearly 60 percent of all injuries.

- Every two-and-a-half minutes, a child is injured on a playground in the United States.
- Approximately 10 percent of children who participate in sports receive some type of injury to the face.
- Thirty-six percent of injuries to children are sports related.

These accidents mostly cause cracked and fractured teeth as well as lip lacerations. In some severe incidents, a tooth is knocked out. Sometimes, high impact collisions can cause a broken jaw.

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Gum Disease

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The first stage of gum disease is called “gingivitis.” It presents itself initially as red, swollen gums. As the disease progresses, you may experience tenderness and bleeding in your gums when you brush your teeth.

If not treated, gingivitis can lead to the more advanced stage of gum disease aka periodontitis. Symptoms of periodontitis include red, swollen or tender gums, gums that have pulled away from the teeth, loose teeth, persistent bad breath and a change in the way your teeth or partial dentures fit together when you bite.

Call us for an appointment immediately if you notice any of the symptoms above. While patients are advised to check for the warning signs, there might not be any discomfort until the disease has spread to a point where the tooth is unsalvageable. That’s why gum disease is sometimes referred to as the “silent killer,” and that is also why we strongly emphasize the importance of your dental recall visits.

How do we treat gum disease?

In the early stages, gum disease is treated by scaling and root planning aka deep cleaning. Deep cleaning involves removing plaque and tartar around the tooth and smoothing the root surfaces. Antibiotics or antimicrobials are sometimes used to supplement the effects of deep cleaning. In most cases of early gum disease, deep

Dental Emergency

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If you or your child experiences a tooth injury this summer, Dr. Huang recommends the following first aid steps for different dental emergency situations.

If a tooth is displaced (loose):

- Attempt to reposition the tooth to its normal alignment using a very light finger pressure, but do not force the tooth.
- Bite down so the tooth does not move.

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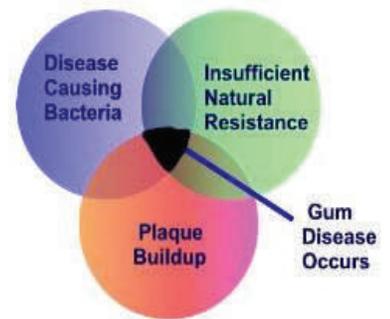
cleaning and proper daily cleaning achieve a satisfactory result. Dr. Andrew Huang designs a personalized program according to each patient’s individual needs. More advance cases may require surgical treatment, which involves cutting the gums to remove the hardened plaque build-up, and/or re-contouring the damaged bone, etc. In these cases, a periodontist (gum specialist) will be involved in your care. Dr. Huang and the specialist will then work together to formulate a treatment plan suitable for each patient.

How do you prevent gum disease?

Removing plaque through daily brushing, flossing, and regular dental professional cleaning is the best way to minimize your risk.

Is periodontal maintenance important?

Yes. Sticking to a regular oral hygiene regimen is crucial for patients who want to sustain the results of periodontal therapy. Some patients are being placed on a 3-4 months dental recall program to ensure that the gum disease does not relapse. In between visits, patients should brush at least twice a day, floss daily, and brush their tongue. An electronic toothbrush is a very good option. Preserve the progress you have made so far!



“For those who were treated for gum disease, preserve the progress you have made so far by sticking to your regular oral hygiene regimen,” says Dr. Andrew Huang.

Dental Emergency

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- Then call your dentist or visit the emergency room. The dentist may be able to splint the tooth in place to the two healthy teeth next to the loose tooth.

If a tooth is knocked out:

- Pick the tooth up by the crown, not by the root (the part of the tooth below the gum). Handling the root may damage the cells necessary for bone reattachment and hinder the replant.
- Gently rinse the tooth in water to remove dirt. Do not scrub.
- Place the clean tooth in the injured person's mouth between the cheek and gum to keep it moist. It is important not to let the tooth dry out.

- If it is not possible to store the tooth in the mouth, wrap the tooth in a clean cloth or gauze and immerse in milk or saline solution.

If a tooth is fractured:

- Rinse mouth with warm water.
- Use an ice pack or cold compress to reduce swelling.
- Use ibuprofen, not aspirin, for pain. (Aspirin is an anti-coagulant, which may cause excessive bleeding in a dental emergency.)
- Immediately, get to your dentist, who will determine treatment based on how badly the tooth is broken. Only a dentist can tell how bad the break is.

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Contact the office right away after your dental emergency. Did you know that we have 24 hours answering service that will page Dr. Huang?

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Dental Emergency

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If the tissue is injured:

- Injuries to the inside of the mouth include tears, puncture wounds and lacerations to the cheek, lips or tongue. The wound should be cleaned right away with warm water, and the injured person taken to a hospital emergency room for the necessary care.
- Bleeding from a tongue laceration can be reduced by pulling the tongue forward and using gauze to place pressure on the wound.

“Accidents will happen, but prevention is the key,” says Dr. Andrew Huang. “Wear the proper protective gear for the activity, play smart by adhering to playground or pool rules and be prepared with a first aid kit, which should include items for a dental emergency.”

A **first aid kit** should include the following items for dental emergencies:

- Dentist's phone number
- Clean handkerchief or cloth
- Gauze
- Small container with lid
- Bottled water
- Saline solution
- Ibuprofen (not aspirin)

Patient Satisfaction Survey

As our patients, you are very important to us. We are in practice because of you. That's why we are committed to delivering a great experience every time you visit us. Your complete satisfaction is our top priority!

If we disappoint you, we want to know...so we can fix it! If you have a question, we want to know...so we can answer it! If we exceed your expectations, we want to know...so we can keep on doing it!

Please take a moment to fill out the enclosed postage-prepaid patient satisfaction survey. Name is optional but needed to enter a drawing for a free Oral-B Triumph Electronic Toothbrush. Thank you for your time.

Mission Statement

Santa Teresa Dental will bring quality dentistry at an affordable price to the community. We will focus on one patient at a time. All patients are treated like family. Patients will be seen in a timely manner. Patient comfort and satisfaction are our priorities. Our goal is to educate patients regarding the importance of oral health and regular dental check-ups. We will serve not only one satisfied patient, but one satisfied family, then finally one satisfied community.