Gum Disease

85% of the population has some form of gum disease.

Periodontal (gum) diseases, including gingivitis and periodontitis, are serious infections that, when left untreated, can lead to tooth loss. Periodontal disease is a chronic bacterial infection that affects the gums and bone supporting the teeth. Periodontal disease can affect one tooth or many teeth. It begins when the bacteria in plaque (the sticky, colorless film that constantly forms on your teeth) causes the gums to become inflamed.

The main goal of treatment is to control the infection and stop it. At your first hygiene appointment, we will evaluate the health of your gums and bone level. We start by taking x-rays to visually evaluate the bone level surrounding your teeth and measure the depth of the gingival sulcus with a probe. The gingival sulcus is the turtle neck of tissue surrounding your teeth. Based on our findings, we will determine if periodontal disease is present and if treatment is necessary.

If gum disease is present, we will start treatment to control and eliminate infection. The first step is a deep cleaning called scaling and root planing. This is usually done over several appointments. Our hygienist generally uses both ultra sonic and hand instruments to clean infected areas. She will remove plaque from above and below the gum line. Smoothing the tooth surfaces helps eliminate bacteria that collect there and helps the gums to reattach. The hygienist may also use an antibacterial rinse to help restore the gums to optimal health. In some cases, she may also use the laser in conjunction with scaling and root planing.

After active treatment is completed and your mouth is in a healthy state you will be scheduled for regular cleanings lasting 45 minutes to an hour about every 3 months.