How much will treatment cost, and is it covered by my insurance?

The cost of your treatment will depend on the severity of your condition and extent of your treatment. Each patient is evaluated, and a treatment plan is developed on an individual basis. Therefore, it is not possible to give an average cost. If you have dental insurance, it will help cover some, and possibly most, of the cost of your treatment*.

What happens after my gum treatment is completed?

The most important phase of managing your gum infection is the maintenance or continuing-care appointments. Since gum disease cannot be cured, disease prevention is the key to long-term success. Published studies of treated patients have shown that periodontal patients typically need to have periodontal maintenance three to four times per year in order to maintain health and retain their teeth.

What are the warning signs of gum disease?

According to the Centers for Disease Control, 47.2 percent of American adults over the age of 30 have mild, moderate or severe gum disease. Prevalence rates rise above 70 percent for those over the age of 65.

*We have a wide range of payment options and welcome most insurance plans and major credit cards. Our staff is trained to assist you in maximizing your insurance coverage, minimizing your out-of-pocket costs, and offering arrangements and other options to pay for your treatment over time.
Gum (periodontal) disease is a serious bacterial infection beneath the gum line that you cannot brush or floss away. Failure to treat the disease may result in other infections and eventual tooth loss. What causes gum disease?

Gum disease is mainly caused by the bacteria found on dental plaque, a sticky colorless film that constantly forms on your teeth. If not carefully removed by daily brushing and flossing, plaque hardens into a rough, porous substance known as tartar (calculus).

Bacteria found in plaque produce toxins that irritate the gums and may cause them to turn red, swell, and bleed easily. If this infection is prolonged, the gums separate from the teeth, causing pockets (spaces) to form. As gum disease progresses, the supporting gum tissue and bone that hold teeth in place deteriorate. Left untreated, this can lead to tooth loss.

Other factors that contribute to increased risk for gum disease include:
- Tobacco use
- Alcohol abuse
- Stress
- Certain medications
- Systemic diseases
- Genetics
- Poor diet

Can gum disease affect my overall health?

Tooth loss is not the only concern with advancing gum disease. Research suggests there may be a link between gum disease and other systemic diseases, such as heart disease, Alzheimer’s, diabetes, stroke, lung problems, preterm low-birth weight in babies and even erectile dysfunction.

Like all chronic diseases, gum disease cannot be cured, only controlled. It won’t get better by itself. It can remain silent and in remission only to act up at a later date. As the condition worsens, it is harder to successfully treat. That is why once gum problems are noticed or diagnosed, it is best to initiate treatment as soon as possible.

How do you treat gum disease?

The first step in treating your gum disease will be to see the hygienist for scaling and root planing. This initial treatment will remove the bacteria and other irritants deep beneath your gums. Depending upon the amount of infection present, laser therapy to decontaminate the pocket or a localized administration of antibiotics may be recommended.

Following this initial therapy, you may be referred to a periodontist for further evaluation. Surgical intervention may be indicated, and the periodontist will discuss this possibility with you. Remember that only after a thorough examination can your periodontist determine this treatment path. Regardless, a scaling and root planing with your hygienist is always the first step. Even if you need surgery, cleaning and preparing the sites are critical to nonsurgical and surgical success.
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Stages of Gum Disease

No gum disease
Healthy gums and bone shown.

Infection sets in
Tartar (calculus) and bacteria lead to infection, destroying gums, ligaments and bone.

Danger of losing teeth
As more bone is destroyed, the tooth is in danger of falling out.

Here are some warning signs:
• Gums that bleed during brushing or flossing
• Red, swollen, or tender gums
• Gums that pull away from teeth
• Persistent bad breath
• Pus between teeth and gums
• Loose or separated teeth

For more information, visit smilegeneration.com/periodontics