

MAKE A RESOLUTION TO KEEP YOUR GUMS HEALTHY

We'll give you the information you need to see it through.

What is gum disease?

Gum disease, also called periodontal disease, is a bacterial infection of the gums and the bone around your teeth. It's caused by bacteria that can live on your teeth and in the spaces between your teeth and gums. If left untreated, gum disease can cause tooth loss, which can have a negative effect on your nutrition, speech, appearance and overall health. **But here's the good news: Gum disease is preventable and treatable.**

Recognizing the signs.¹

Like many diseases, the earlier you catch gum disease, the better chance you have of successfully treating it. Here are symptoms to look for that could indicate gum disease:

- › Bad breath that won't go away
- › Red or swollen gums
- › Tender or bleeding gums
- › Painful chewing
- › Loose teeth
- › Sensitive teeth
- › Receding gums or longer appearing teeth

Preventing gum disease.

With regular dental checkups and by adopting good oral hygiene and healthy eating habits at home, you and your dentist can work together as a team to help reduce your risk of gum disease.

At the dentist's office:

Routine exams and cleanings may help catch a problem before you need expensive treatment. If you have good gum health, your dentist will probably suggest a routine teeth cleaning once or twice a year. This preventive care helps remove plaque, tartar and stains from your teeth.

At home:¹

- › Brush your teeth twice a day, for at least two minutes each time
- › Floss at least once a day
- › Eat a balanced diet
- › Schedule regular visits to your dentist
- › Don't smoke or use tobacco products

Together, all the way.®



Treating gum disease.¹

If you show signs of gum disease, your dentist will likely recommend a deep cleaning (also known as scaling and root planing, or periodontal maintenance).

A deep cleaning usually requires you to come in for a few appointments. Each appointment will focus on a different section of your mouth. Your dentist or hygienist may need to numb your mouth before the cleaning. And you may need medication afterwards to manage any pain and prevent infection.

Ask your dentist if you have any questions about your cleaning. If you're a Cigna customer and need more information or have questions about your plan coverage, call the toll-free number on your dental ID card. A customer service representative is available to help you 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chew on this:

- › **47.2% of adults age 30+ have some form of periodontal disease.²**
- › **Periodontal disease increases with age - 70.1% of adults age 65+ have periodontal disease.²**
- › **People with gum disease may be more likely to develop complications with heart disease or diabetes.¹**
- › **Women with gum disease may be more likely to deliver preterm, low birth weight babies.¹**
- › **Controlling gum disease can help save your teeth.¹**



1. "Periodontal (Gum) Disease: Causes, Symptoms, and Treatments" NIH. December 2014 <<http://www.nidcr.nih.gov/oralhealth/Topics/GumDiseases/PeriodontalGumDisease.htm#howDol>>

2. "Periodontal Disease" CDC. March 2015. <http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/periodontal_disease/>

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