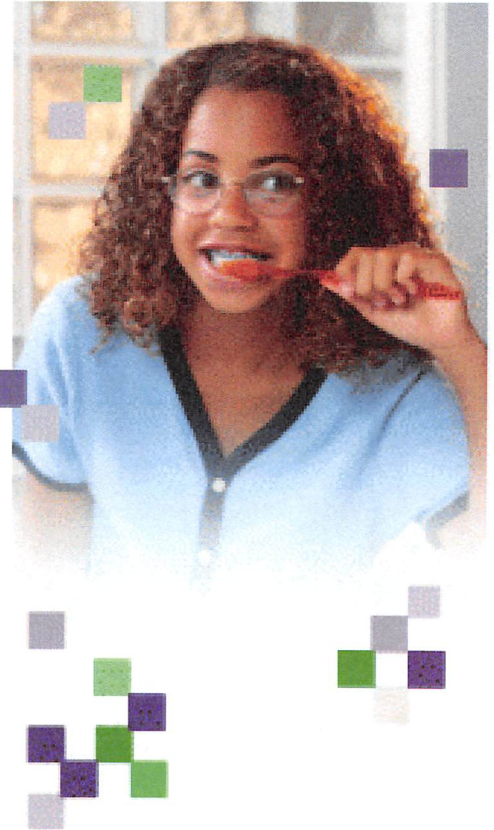


IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT GOOD ORAL HEALTH

Dental hygienists help you prevent gum disease and tooth decay. They work with you to help keep your mouth healthy. Dental hygienists help you attain and maintain oral health, making an important contribution to your overall health.

Periodontal (gum) disease is one of the most common human diseases. The signs of gum disease may include bleeding or swollen gums. It's an infectious condition that can result in the destruction of gum tissue and bone. If left untreated, the bacteria that cause gum disease may travel through the blood stream increasing the chance of heart disease, stroke, respiratory diseases and pregnancy complications.

The link between oral infections and other diseases in the body is becoming well documented and accepted within the health care community. It underscores the importance of good oral hygiene and the role dental hygienists play in preventing oral disease.

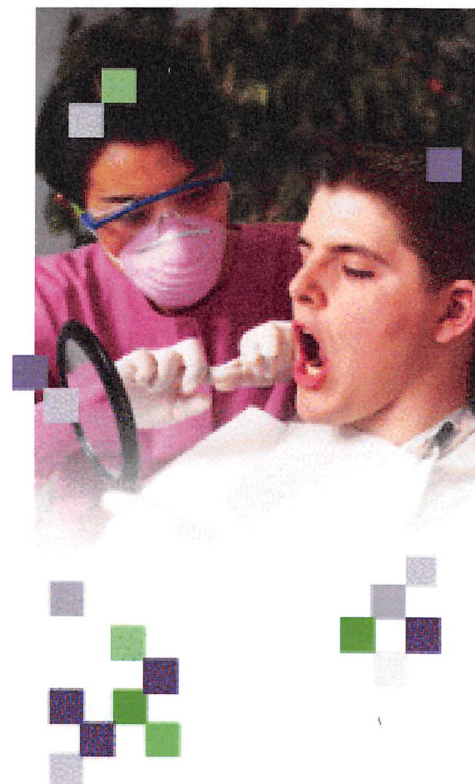


What You Can Do About Gum Disease

FACT: *Statistics show that as many as 75 percent of adults over the age of 30 may suffer from some degree of gum disease. It's the most common disease of humans.*

Gum disease may be a risk factor for a number of serious health conditions such as **heart disease and stroke**, **pneumonia and other respiratory diseases**, **diabetes** and premature or low birth weight babies.

If you have gum disease, the bacteria from swollen or bleeding gums can travel through the bloodstream, potentially worsening or causing other types of health problems.



How gum disease develops

Gum disease starts with the formation of hard and soft deposits on the surface of the teeth. Over time, a buildup of bacteria called plaque collects at the gum line, eventually hardening on the teeth into deposits called calculus or tartar.

Without proper oral care, these bacteria can cause inflammation of the gums (gingivitis), penetrate the gum line and finally spread into the underlying bone (periodontitis).

If left untreated, the infection can eventually lead to shrinking and/or swelling, bleeding gums, loose teeth, abscesses and, ultimately, loss of teeth.

What you can do

If you have gum disease and/or are at risk for heart disease, stroke or respiratory diseases, it is particularly important to pay attention to your oral health. With regular, proper home and professional oral care, gum disease can be controlled and sometimes even stopped or reversed.