

Periodontal Treatment

Understanding Periodontitis:

Periodontitis is an aggressive form of gum disease characterized by the irreversible deterioration of tissues and bone supporting teeth in the jaw. This condition is triggered by bacterial accumulation at the gum line in the form of dental plaque. To mitigate its effects, regular brushing and cleaning between the teeth twice a day are essential. Failure to maintain proper oral hygiene leads to the separation of gums from teeth, the formation of pockets, and the growth of plaque beneath the gum line. Over time, the supporting bone diminishes, causing gums to recede, and ultimately resulting in loose teeth or tooth loss.

Risk Factors for Gum Disease:

While mild gum disease can affect most people, some individuals are more prone to aggressive forms, with a familial predisposition to severe cases. Factors contributing to a higher risk of severe gum disease include:

Diabetes (especially when poorly controlled)

Smoking (including e-cigarettes)

Stress

Poor diet lacking essential vitamins and minerals

Obesity

Certain medications

Identifying Symptoms:

Periodontal disease is often asymptomatic, often called "the silent disease." Therefore, individuals may remain unaware until the disease reaches an advanced stage or is detected during a dental examination. Symptoms that warrant attention include:

Bleeding gums during brushing or eating

Red, swollen gums

Persistent bad breath

Gaps between teeth

Teeth becoming loose or shifting in position

Receding gums

Sensitivity to hot or cold foods and beverages

Treatment Overview:

Periodontal treatment is a multi-stage process. The initial phase involves a comprehensive assessment of the disease's extent and severity, coupled with educating the patient on achieving optimal oral hygiene. Thorough teeth cleaning is crucial, performed twice daily to a high standard.

The subsequent stage encompasses the meticulous removal of calculus, plaque, toxins, and diseased tissues from teeth and root surfaces, both above and below the gum line. This process is often performed in multiple appointments and under local anaesthesia to avoid discomfort and allow thorough cleaning to be done.

The success of periodontal treatment depends on maintaining low plaque levels and managing other risk factors. While this approach proves effective for the majority, individuals with severe gum disease may require referral to a gum specialist known as a Periodontist, particularly in complex cases.

For more information visit: <https://www.bsperio.org.uk/patients>