

What is Periodontal Disease

Periodontal disease or gum disease is an infection around the teeth caused by bacteria or germs. Periodontal disease is the most common disease in the world. Seventy-five to ninety percent of adults will experience some form of periodontal disease in their lifetime.

Periodontal disease is found mostly in adults. Children can have periodontal disease but it is not common. The bacteria or germs that cause this infection live in every adults mouth. These germs collect on our teeth every day. If they are not removed thoroughly by brushing and flossing, they start to grow and migrate under the gum line.

These germs that grow below the gum line produce toxins or poisons. The toxins start a destructive process which causes the bone surrounding and supporting the teeth to be destroyed.

Once under the gum line, the germs attach to the roots of the teeth. At this stage, the germs are now right next to the bone and the toxins or poisons produced by these germs cause the bone to be gradually destroyed. As the bone is destroyed, the bacteria continue to migrate dissolving the bone toward the tip of the root. Eventually, enough bone is destroyed that the teeth begin to loosen and ultimately are lost due to the loss of bone support. Although this infection is often called gum disease, it is the bone that experiences this destructive process.

Periodontal disease is preventable and treatable. Every year, new information, new techniques and new products are becoming available to help stop this infection. My advice is to educate yourself, discuss this with your dentist, and don't let this infection rob you of your smile.