



## The Prevention and Therapy for Periodontal Disease 牙周病之治療與預防(英文)

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### What is periodontal disease?

Periodontal disease, also known as “ gum disease ” , is a chronic dental problem which can lead to [bad breath](#), [receding gums](#), mobile teeth, and tooth loss eventually. The therapy of gum disease requires the dental treatments provided by dental professionals (usually periodontists), and the good cooperation of the patients. If the patient does not clean the teeth according to dental professionals’ instructions, the treatment outcome will be less than satisfying or the cured disease will recur.

Bacteria are the main factor causing periodontal disease. As bacteria accumulate around the teeth and form “dental plaque” , the toxin produced by bacteria will penetrate deeply into the tissues surrounding the teeth. Over time, dental plaque gets hardened ( calcified ) by the mineral contents from the saliva and become “dental calculus ”( tartar ). Dental calculus will be attached to the tooth surfaces and cannot be brushed away using toothbrushes, it thus results in gum inflammation. The typical symptoms of periodontal disease included gum redness, bad breath, and bleeding when brushing teeth. The mild symptoms may progress to become severe ones such as tooth mobility and tooth loss. Periodontal disease can also be asymptomatic and easy to be neglected. That is why most patients tend to present severe periodontal disease when they come for consultation for the first time.

### How to prevent periodontal disease

Prevention is much more important than treatment. The best way to have good dental health is to brush and floss the teeth after every meal and have regular dental checkups every 6 months or with a shorter interval according to the dentist’ s advice.

## How to manage periodontal disease?

The four stages of periodontal disease treatment

1. Non-surgical treatment
2. Surgical treatment
3. Maintenance
4. Reconstruction

### First stage: non-surgical treatment

The non-surgical treatment is to treat the mild periodontal disease. The dentists will use special tools to remove the deep tartar on the root surfaces below the gum, and give the patients oral hygiene instructions.

It includes :

1. Clinical consultation to collect the associated medical and dental information
2. Charting: detailed measurement of the severity of gum disease of each tooth
3. Full-mouth x-ray examination
4. Oral hygiene instructions
5. Scaling : using ultrasonic tool to remove the deep tartar
6. Root planning and subgingival curettage: using hand tools to remove the deep tartar and the gum tissues with inflammation

## What to do after finishing periodontal disease treatment?

Daily oral hygiene care is absolutely needed. 3~5 times of follow-up examination are required after finishing the full course of periodontal disease treatment. After the condition is stabilized, regular dental checkup for tooth cleaning ( scaling ) every half a year is advised. Never hesitate to visit your doctor whenever you feel anything wrong with your teeth.