

## GINGIVITIS



Gingivitis is a mild form of gum disease that can result in redness, swelling, and bleeding. If left untreated, gingivitis can progress to periodontitis, a more serious gum disease that destroys the bone and can lead to tooth loss. According to the American Academy of Periodontists, 3 out of 4 Americans have some form of gum disease, including gingivitis.

### **Gingivitis Symptoms**

Gingivitis generally does not cause pain, so it is important to recognize the symptoms before it leads to periodontitis. Signs of gingivitis include red, spongy, shiny, or swollen gums that bleed easily, even during gentle tooth brushing. Gingivitis may only affect a small area of the mouth in the early stages. If it progresses, gum disease can affect the entire mouth, making the gums painful to the touch, and in severe cases, bleed spontaneously.

### **Gingivitis Causes**

The main cause of gingivitis is dental plaque. Dental plaque is a sticky film of bacteria that continually grows on the teeth and under the gums. If not removed or controlled on a daily basis, it accumulates around and between your teeth and below the gumline. Other contributors to the risk and severity of gum disease and oral health problems are smoking and diabetes.

The bacteria in plaque release toxins that irritate the gums and cause inflammation, leading to infection and bad breath. If left undisturbed, plaque can harden around the teeth and under the gums to form tartar (calculus), which must be removed by a dentist or dental hygienist.

### **Gingivitis Treatment and the Waterpik® Water Flosser**

The good news is that gingivitis and gum disease are both preventable and treatable. Adding a Waterpik® Water Flosser to your tooth brushing routine is one of the fastest and most effective ways to fight gum disease. A recent study at the University of Nebraska found that the Waterpik® Water Flosser was up to 93% better in reducing bleeding and up to 52% better in reducing inflammation versus traditional string floss.

Not all water flossers are created equal. The Waterpik® Water Flosser was invented by a dentist and has been clinically proven to have the best combination of pulsation and pressure to clean where brushing and flossing can't reach.

If you see signs of gingivitis or gum disease, call your dentist and make an appointment for an exam and assessment of your oral health, especially if it has been a while since your last visit. Your dentist and dental hygienist can best determine the cause and treatment of your periodontal disease.