

SMOKING



Smoking is a major risk factor for developing periodontal (gum) disease.

- People who smoke are four times more likely to have periodontal disease than non-smokers.
- The more you smoke, the more likely you are to have a more severe case of periodontal disease.
- People who continue to smoke while being treated for periodontitis will have up to 50% less healing response than non-smokers.

Smokers may not have the usual first signs of gum disease such as redness, swelling, and bleeding. The nicotine in cigarettes constricts blood vessels and impairs this response. However, if you look closer, other signs of periodontal disease are present, such as bone loss and periodontal pockets.

If you smoke, the best thing you can do for you and your family is to stop. Quitting smoking cannot reverse previous damage done to your teeth, gums, and bone, but the disease process slows down significantly and your response to treatment is similar to someone who has never smoked. Cigars, pipe smoking, and smokeless tobacco are also risk factors for periodontal disease.

If you have periodontal disease due to current or former smoking, you should consider adding a Waterpik® Water Flosser to your daily tooth brushing.

Studies show that people previously treated for periodontal disease who added a Waterpik® Water Flosser to their daily routine had better reductions in bleeding and gingivitis than those who did not.

Additionally, it is not uncommon to have some pockets remaining after treatment. The biggest problem this creates is keeping the pocket clean. To improve your cleaning of a pocket, use a Waterpik® Water Flosser with a Pik Pocket™ Tip. This tip is easy to use and gently cleans periodontal pockets deeper than string floss.