



PERIODONTAL THERAPY / PERIODONTAL MAINTENANCE

Periodontal (gum) disease is caused by a bacterial infection which starts in the pocket or space between your tooth and gums (similar to the space between your finger and your fingernail). Initially this process is reversible and is known as “gingivitis,” or swollen gums. Untreated this infection commonly spreads into the periodontal ligament surrounding the teeth and then to the bone supporting the teeth, leading bone loss around the tooth, and eventually to tooth loss. This disease process is chronic and may have periods of more aggressive deterioration. More importantly, periodontal disease has been linked to many systemic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, stroke, respiratory diseases, pancreatic cancer, obesity, Alzheimer's disease, still birth, low birth weight babies, premature delivery, and the list continues to grow. At *Inspired Dental Wellness* we practice whole person dentistry, and our goal is to partner with you to get you as healthy as you would like to be. That is why we want to educate you on the oral disease with systemic health effects.

Although proper daily oral hygiene is a "must" it is often not enough to keep our mouths healthy. One-third of it is what we do, one-third of it is what you do daily at home (don't worry... we will give you oral hygiene coaching), and one-third of it is how your body responds. There are many contributing factors to our susceptibility to gum disease including genetics, your immune response, systemic diseases, medications, and even stress.

The doctors and hygienists at Inspired Dental Wellness have recommended you have your periodontal disease treated with non-surgical gum therapy (scaling and root planing). This entails 2 to 4 one-to-two-hour appointments with a member of our team which includes deep scaling, debriding the roots of any calculus (“tartar”) and biofilm (sticky, harmful plaque colonies). This may include the use of anesthetic to ensure you are as comfortable as possible during the process.

Four to six weeks after this non-surgical therapy is completed, we will assess how your body responded and will most likely recommend periodontal maintenance therapy every 3 months in order to keep the periodontal disease process controlled. It takes about that long for the gum disease causing bacteria to organize itself and cause more damage. These will hopefully become well-visits where we partner with you to obtain and maintain health, and include ongoing assessment, isolated areas of deep scaling, and routine prophylaxis as needed.

Additional treatment such as a referral to a periodontist (gum specialist), laser treatment, restorative care, bite adjustments, etc. may be recommended depending on your response to the treatment.