

## Periodontitis and its Impact on Overall Health: Contributing Factors, Symptoms and Therapeutic Approaches

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### DESCRIPTION

Periodontitis, also known as gum disease, is a serious bacterial infection that damages the soft tissue and destroys the bone that supports your teeth. Left untreated, it can lead to tooth loss and has been linked to several systemic health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes and respiratory disease. Periodontitis is more advanced than gingivitis, the initial stage of gum disease and requires professional dental treatment to prevent further complications. Understanding its causes, symptoms and treatment options is essential for maintaining good oral health.

### Causes of periodontitis

Periodontitis is caused by the accumulation of plaque on teeth, which is a sticky film of bacteria. Plaque that is not removed by regular brushing and flossing hardens into tartar (calculus), which can only be removed by a dentist. As plaque and tartar build up along the gum line, the bacteria begin to infect the gums, leading to inflammation. Several factors contribute to the development of periodontitis, including:

**Poor oral hygiene:** Inconsistent or inadequate brushing and flossing allows plaque to build up, increasing the risk of gum disease.

**Smoking or chewing tobacco:** Tobacco products significantly increase the risk of gum disease by impairing blood flow to the gums and decreasing the body's ability to fight infections.

**Genetics:** Some individuals may be genetically predisposed to developing periodontitis, even with good oral hygiene practices.

**Medical conditions:** Conditions like diabetes, heart disease and respiratory diseases may increase the risk of developing periodontitis. Additionally, medications that reduce saliva flow or cause gum overgrowth can contribute to the disease.

### Symptoms of periodontitis

Periodontitis often develops without obvious symptoms in its early stages. However, as the disease progresses, the following symptoms may appear.

**Red swollen gums:** The gums may appear inflamed and bleed easily, particularly when brushing or flossing.

**Receding gums:** The gums may start to pull away from the teeth, causing the teeth to appear longer than usual.

**Persistent bad breath:** Foul-smelling breath (halitosis) is a common symptom due to the buildup of bacteria in the mouth.

**Painful chewing:** As the disease affects the gums and underlying structures, chewing may become painful or uncomfortable.

### Therapeutic approaches

The treatment of periodontitis depends on the severity of the disease and the damage caused to the gums and supporting structures. Common treatment options include:

**Scaling and root planing:** This deep cleaning procedure involves removing plaque and tartar from below the gum line and smoothing the root surfaces to help the gums reattach to the teeth.

**Antibiotics:** Antibiotic medications may be prescribed to help control the bacterial infection. These may come in the form of oral tablets or topical gels placed directly on the gums.

**Flap surgery (pocket reduction surgery):** In cases of advanced periodontitis, a surgeon may make small incisions in the gums to remove tartar buildup beneath the gum line and then stitch the gums back in place.

**Bone and tissue grafts:** In cases where the bone or soft tissue is severely damaged, grafting procedures may be performed to regenerate lost tissue and restore the gum line.

### CONCLUSION

Dental implants are a revolutionary solution for individuals who have lost teeth. Offering long-term durability, improved functionality and a natural appearance, dental implants provide a significant improvement over traditional methods like dentures or bridges. With advancements in dental technology, implants have become a safe and effective option for restoring smiles and maintaining oral health.

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