

## WHAT CAUSES PERIODONTAL DISEASE?

The primary cause of periodontal disease is plaque! Plaque is that sticky, clear or white substance that clings to your teeth and braces. This bacteria causes inflammation and infection within the gums. It's the toxic acids produced by plaque that can destroy the supporting fibers and bone tissue.

If not removed daily, plaque can harden and turn into tartar. Tartar is a tough, gritty deposit that gives plaque a rough surface to which it can cling. This substance which at one time could be brushed away with a toothbrush, once it becomes tartar it needs to be removed through professional cleaning.

Once removed, plaque reforms again with 24 hours! It poses a constant threat to the health of your teeth and gums. That's why daily home care is essential to fight this disease. How you clean is most important, particularly in between your teeth

### **Brush the Outsides and Insides**

Brush the outside of each tooth, using a circular motion. Then brush the inside.



### **Brush the Brackets and Gums**

Brush slowly between the brackets and gums. Tilt the bristles into the gums and brush using a circular motion. Be sure to brush the gums around the front teeth, too.



### **Brush the Tops of the Teeth**

Clean the top of each tooth with a back-and-forth motion. Brush your tongue too. Then rinse your mouth. If your teeth and appliances don't shine, start over and brush them again.



### **Thread the Floss**

Thread the floss through the threader. Then slip the floss behind the archwire. Or use floss with a foam or gauze coating.



### **Work the Floss**

Pull the floss between two teeth. Work it up and down under your gums. Repeat between every tooth. Then rinse.



## **Warning Signs of Gum Disease:**

Gums that bleed when you brush

Red, swollen, tender gums

Gums that pull away (recede) from your teeth

Persistent bad breath

## **COLD SORES**

Cold sores are small blisters filled with fluid that most often occur around the mouth area. It is a painful and highly contagious condition that commonly affects the lips, mucous membranes, gums, and skin around the mouth, but it can also spread to the fingers or eyes. An individual will break out with small bumps or blisters that eventually turn into scabs and go away. Cold sores are caused by a virus called herpes simplex type I. An individual will generally break out with a cold sore within one or two weeks of direct contact with the virus. Stress, menstruation, exposure to the sun, an arid climate, trauma to the mouth area and poor diet can cause a cold sore. Some individuals are more susceptible to the virus, and may have repeated breakouts.

Symptoms of cold sores include tingling, burning, itching, pain and tenderness in the area prior to the eruption of the blisters. An individual about to develop a cold sore may have a headache, fever or flu-like symptoms.

Once the blisters develop, they rupture and fluid drains out-forming a crusty sore. The cold sore, which lasts seven to ten days, eventually goes away without scarring. There is an array of medications on the market designed to help alleviate the pain and promote healing, but most do not shorten the duration of the infection. Some medications prescribed can prevent future breakouts, while others may be used to help speed up the healing process.

Your dentist can advise you on various treatment options. Ice may help with pain. The area should be kept as clean as possible. If you experience recurring cold sores, contact your physician or dentist who can diagnose the problem and recommend the best course of treatment.