

Gum Disease Treatment at Core Dental Berwick

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Description:

Gum Disease Treatment at Core Dental Berwick *Comprehensive periodontal care from a team that's been trusted in the Berwick community for over a decade — with specialist referral access when you ne...

Details:

Comprehensive periodontal care from a team that's been trusted in the Berwick community for over a decade — with specialist referral access when you need it.

The Disease Most People Don't Know They Have

Here's a statistic that surprises most people: around one in three Australian adults has some form of gum disease. It's one of the most common chronic diseases in the country, yet most people who have it don't know it. That's because gum disease — particularly in its early stages — is largely painless. It develops slowly, quietly, and without the kind of obvious symptoms that would send you running to the dentist.

By the time gum disease announces itself with symptoms you can't ignore — loose teeth, receding gums, persistent bad breath, teeth that are visibly shifting — it has often progressed to a stage where significant damage has already occurred. Damage that's much harder to reverse than it would have been to prevent.

At Core Dental Berwick, gum disease assessment is a standard part of every dental check-up. Our team — including dental hygienist Isabelle Sayers — is trained to detect the earliest signs of gum disease, provide effective treatment at every stage, and help you maintain healthy gums for the long term. And for complex or advanced cases, our connection to the Smile Solutions group gives you seamless access to specialist periodontists at the Collins Street Specialist Centre in Melbourne's CBD.

What Is Gum Disease?

Gum disease (periodontal disease) is an infection of the tissues that surround and support your teeth. It's caused by bacteria in dental plaque — the sticky film that forms on your teeth throughout the day. When plaque isn't effectively removed through brushing and flossing, the bacteria produce toxins that irritate the gums, triggering an inflammatory response.

Stage 1: Gingivitis

Gingivitis is the earliest stage of gum disease — and the only stage that's fully reversible. It involves inflammation of the gums without any damage to the underlying bone or connective tissue that holds your teeth in place.

****Signs of gingivitis:**** - Red, swollen, or puffy gums (healthy gums are pink and firm) - Bleeding when you brush or floss — this is ****not**** normal, despite being very common - Gums that are tender to touch - Persistent bad breath (halitosis)

Many people assume bleeding gums are just a sign of brushing too hard. They're not. Bleeding gums are almost always a sign of inflammation — your gums are telling you that something isn't right.

The good news: gingivitis is entirely treatable and reversible with professional cleaning and improved home care. No permanent damage has occurred at this stage.

Stage 2: Mild to Moderate Periodontitis

If gingivitis is left untreated, the inflammation can progress deeper — from the gums into the periodontal ligament and the bone that supports your teeth. This is periodontitis, and unlike gingivitis, the damage it causes is not fully reversible.

****What happens:**** - The gums begin to pull away from the teeth, forming pockets between the tooth and the gum tissue - These pockets trap more bacteria and plaque, accelerating the disease - The bone and connective tissue that hold your teeth in place begin to break down - Without treatment, this progressive bone loss continues

****Signs of periodontitis:**** - Deepening gum pockets (measured by your dentist during examination) - Persistent bleeding, redness, and swelling - Gum recession — teeth appearing longer as the gum pulls back - Increased sensitivity, particularly at the gumline - Bad breath that doesn't resolve with brushing - Pus between teeth and gums

Stage 3: Advanced Periodontitis

In advanced periodontitis, the bone and connective tissue destruction is severe. Teeth may become visibly loose, shift position, or develop gaps between them that weren't there before. Eating can become difficult, and teeth may need to be extracted because there's simply not enough supporting structure left to save them.

Advanced periodontitis is the leading cause of tooth loss in Australian adults. But it doesn't happen overnight — it's the end result of years of untreated, progressive disease. Which is exactly why early detection and treatment are so important.

Risk Factors for Gum Disease

While plaque bacteria are the primary cause of gum disease, several factors increase your risk:

****Smoking and tobacco use:**** The single biggest modifiable risk factor for gum disease. Smokers are significantly more likely to develop gum disease, develop more severe forms, and respond less well to treatment. Smoking also masks symptoms (reduced bleeding), making detection harder.

****Diabetes:**** People with diabetes — particularly poorly controlled diabetes — are at significantly higher risk of gum disease. The relationship goes both ways: gum disease can make it harder to control blood sugar levels, and high blood sugar levels promote gum disease. Managing one helps manage the other.

****Medications:**** Some medications reduce saliva flow (causing dry mouth), which increases gum disease risk because saliva helps wash away bacteria and buffer acid. Others, such as certain blood pressure medications and anti-seizure drugs, can cause gum overgrowth. Tell your dentist about all medications you're taking.

****Genetics:**** Some people are more susceptible to gum disease than others, regardless of their oral hygiene habits. If you have a family history of gum disease or tooth loss, you may need more vigilant monitoring and preventive care.

****Hormonal changes:**** Pregnancy, menopause, and hormonal fluctuations can affect gum health, making gums more sensitive and susceptible to inflammation.

****Stress:**** Chronic stress affects the immune system's ability to fight infection, including gum infections.

****Poor nutrition:**** A diet lacking essential nutrients — particularly vitamin C — can compromise gum health and the body's ability to fight infection.

Gum Disease Treatment at Core Dental Berwick

Assessment and Diagnosis

Gum disease assessment is integrated into every comprehensive dental examination at Core Dental Berwick. Your dentist will:

- ****Visually assess your gums**** for signs of inflammation, recession, and tissue changes
- ****Measure pocket depths**** using a periodontal probe — a thin instrument gently inserted between each tooth and the gum. Healthy pockets are 1–3mm; deeper pockets indicate disease progression
- ****Take digital X-rays**** to assess bone levels around your teeth — bone loss is the definitive indicator of periodontitis
- ****Assess tooth mobility**** — loose teeth indicate advanced bone loss
- ****Review risk factors**** — smoking, diabetes, medications, and family history all inform your treatment plan

Based on this assessment, your dentist will determine the stage and severity of any gum disease present and recommend an appropriate treatment plan.

Treatment for Gingivitis

Gingivitis is treated with professional cleaning and improved home care:

****Professional cleaning (scale and clean):**** Our dental hygienist Isabelle Sayers or your dentist will remove all plaque and tartar from above and below the gumline. This eliminates the bacterial colonies that are causing the inflammation and gives your gums a chance to heal.

****Oral hygiene instruction:**** Tailored advice on brushing technique, interdental cleaning (floss, interdental brushes, or water flossers), and any additional products that might help — such as antibacterial mouthwash.

****Follow-up:**** A follow-up appointment is typically scheduled 4–6 weeks later to assess how the gums have responded. In most cases, gingivitis resolves completely with professional cleaning and consistent home care.

Treatment for Periodontitis: Scaling and Root Planing

When gum disease has progressed to periodontitis, a deeper level of cleaning is required — called scaling and root planing (sometimes referred to as a "deep clean").

****Scaling**** removes plaque and tartar from below the gumline, within the deepened pockets that have formed between the teeth and gums.

****Root planing**** smooths the root surfaces of the teeth. This removes bacterial toxins embedded in the root surface, eliminates rough areas where bacteria accumulate, and creates a clean, smooth surface that helps the gums reattach to the tooth.

Scaling and root planing is typically performed under local anaesthesia for comfort. It may be done over two or more appointments, treating different sections of the mouth at each visit.

After treatment, your gums need time to heal. Follow-up appointments are scheduled to monitor healing, re-measure pocket depths, and assess whether further treatment is needed.

Ongoing Maintenance (Periodontal Maintenance)

Gum disease is a chronic condition. Even after successful treatment, the bacteria that cause it are always present in the mouth, and the disease will return if preventive maintenance lapses. Patients who have been treated for periodontitis typically need more frequent professional cleaning appointments — usually every three to four months rather than the standard six months.

These maintenance appointments include: - Professional cleaning above and below the gumline - Monitoring pocket depths - Assessment of gum health and any signs of disease recurrence - Reinforcement of home care techniques

Specialist Referral for Advanced Cases

For complex or advanced periodontitis, our affiliation with the Smile Solutions group gives you direct access to specialist periodontists at the Collins Street Specialist Centre in Melbourne's CBD. Periodontists are dental specialists who have completed additional years of postgraduate training specifically in the treatment of gum disease and the placement of dental implants.

Specialist periodontal treatment may include: - Surgical pocket reduction (flap surgery) - Bone grafting to regenerate lost bone - Guided tissue regeneration - Soft tissue grafts to cover exposed roots and address recession - Complex implant placement in compromised bone

The referral pathway is seamless — your Berwick dentist identifies the need, discusses it with you, and arranges the specialist appointment. Your records and X-rays are shared securely, and after specialist treatment, ongoing maintenance returns to your Berwick team.

The Gum Disease–Whole Health Connection

Research over the past two decades has established clear links between gum disease and several systemic health conditions:

****Heart disease and stroke:**** People with periodontitis have a higher risk of cardiovascular disease. The inflammation associated with gum disease appears to contribute to the development and progression of arterial plaque.

****Diabetes:**** The relationship is bidirectional — gum disease makes diabetes harder to control, and poorly controlled diabetes makes gum disease worse. Treating gum disease can improve blood sugar management.

****Respiratory disease:**** Bacteria from infected gums can be inhaled into the lungs, potentially contributing to respiratory infections, particularly in elderly or immunocompromised patients.

****Pregnancy complications:**** Periodontitis has been associated with premature birth and low birth weight. Pregnant women with gum disease should seek treatment — it's safe during pregnancy and beneficial for both mother and baby.

****Dementia:**** Emerging research suggests links between chronic gum disease and cognitive decline, though the mechanisms are still being studied.

These connections underscore the importance of treating gum disease not just as a dental issue but as a whole-health concern.

Prevention: Keeping Your Gums Healthy

****Brush effectively, twice daily.**** Use a soft-bristled toothbrush (electric is generally more effective) and brush for a full two minutes. Angle the bristles at 45 degrees toward the gumline — this is where plaque accumulates most.

****Clean between your teeth daily.**** Floss, interdental brushes, or a water flosser — the method matters less than the consistency. Brushing alone misses approximately 40% of tooth surfaces.

****Don't smoke.**** If you smoke, quitting is the single most impactful thing you can do for your gum health — and your health generally.

****Attend regular check-ups.**** Six-monthly for most people; three to four-monthly if you have a history of gum disease. Early detection changes outcomes dramatically.

****Manage systemic conditions.**** If you have diabetes, work with your medical team to maintain good blood sugar control. If you're taking medications that cause dry mouth, talk to us about strategies to manage that.

****Eat well.**** A balanced diet supports immune function and gum health. Vitamin C, in particular, plays a role in gum tissue maintenance and repair.

Why Choose Core Dental Berwick?

****Over a decade of community trust.**** We've been part of the Berwick community for more than ten years — long enough to know our patients, their families, and their histories.

****Dedicated dental hygienist.**** Isabelle Sayers provides expert preventive and periodontal care, with the thoroughness and patient education that effective gum disease management requires.

****Specialist referral access.**** Direct referral to periodontists at the Smile Solutions Collins Street Specialist Centre for advanced cases.

****Comprehensive, long-term care.**** We don't just treat gum disease — we manage it over the long term, with regular maintenance and monitoring to prevent recurrence.

****Convenient location.**** Eden Rise Village, Berwick — easy parking, central location, accessible from across the south-east.

Book Your Assessment

If you've noticed bleeding gums, persistent bad breath, gum recession, or if it's been more than six months since your last dental check-up, book an assessment at Core Dental Berwick. Early detection is the key to effective treatment.

****Core Dental Berwick**** Shop 29, 1 O'Shea Rd, Berwick VIC 3806 Phone: (03) 9132 4160 National: 13 13 16 Email: berwick@coredental.com.au

Monday – Friday: 8:00 am – 6:00 pm Saturday: 8:00 am – 1:30 pm Sunday: Closed