Smoking is Hazardous to Oral Health

Long term smoking seriously affects the body's defense mechanism and healing capacity. Data show that smokers have higher chances of getting heart disease and lung cancer.

Besides, smoking has the following harmful effects to oral health:

- Smoking produces bad breath
- Smokers have badly stained Teeth
- The chance of smokers developing periodontal disease is 5 times higher than that of non-smokers
- The heavier the smoking, the more severe the periodontal disease
- Smokers have higher chance of developing oral cancer
What is Periodontal Disease?

Periodontal Disease is a disease which damages the gingivae (the 'gums'), the jaw-bones and the periodontal tissues. Mild periodontal disease will give rise to gingival inflammation and bleeding. When the disease becomes severe, the gingivae and the jaw-bones will resorb; the teeth will loosen up, even to the point of falling out.

Healthy gingivae are pink and tightly bound down to the teeth

The signs of periodontal disease:

- The gingivae are inflamed, red, swollen and bleed
- The gingivae and the jaw-bones recede, forming periodontal pockets
- The teeth lose their support, become loose and will fall out eventually
Congratulations! You have a healthy body; please do take good care of it! Never underestimate the effects of smoking. Though you have not detected any problem, do go for routine oral examination. Not only will it ensure good health, but any periodontal disease, if detected, can be treated promptly.

Even if smoking is harmful, I brush my teeth thoroughly every day to remove the dental plaque; there is no reason why I should develop Periodontal Disease!

It is very important to thoroughly remove the dental plaque. The problem is that dental plaque continuously forms and accumulates on the surfaces of the teeth and will affect the supporting tissues of teeth (periodontal tissues). Furthermore, the nicotine in the cigarettes will diminish the healing capacity of the oral tissues and reduce the body resistance. Thus, regardless of the oral hygiene condition of the smoker, his chance of developing periodontal disease is increased!

I believe……. I've always enjoyed good health and have never had any problems with my teeth: Smoking will not affect me!
It's never too late! You can prevent the periodontal disease from progressing. You should quit smoking immediately and find your own dentist for treatment.

For the benefit of your oral health, we recommend you quit smoking right now.

To further improve your oral health, you need to seek help from your dentist.

4 steps to quit smoking

Discover motive:
List out the reasons for not smoking, use them as your motivators!

Make plans:
Make a quit smoking plan by changing those habits that would encourage dependence on smoking

Persevere:
Be determined, persevere! Never let cigarettes tempt you again.

Seek help:
If you need any support and assistance, then ring 'The Hong Kong Council for Smoking and Health' 24-hour hotline at 2838 3266

Oral Health Education Unit
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