

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 on oral health:

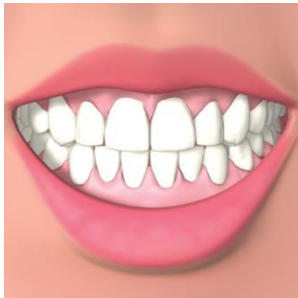
- Smoking may produce bad breath
- Smokers tend to have stains on teeth
- The chance of smokers developing gum disease is 5 times or more likely higher than that of non-smokers
- Smokers have a higher chance of developing oral cancer

What is Gum Disease?

Gum disease is a disease which damages the gingivae (the 'gums'), the jaw bones and the periodontal tissues. Mild gum 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

Healthy gingivae are pink and tightly bound down to the teeth



The signs of gum disease:

- The gingivae are inflamed, red, swollen and bleed easily



- The gingivae and the jaw bones recede, forming periodontal pockets



- The teeth lose their support, become loose and will fall out eventually



I believe.....

I've always enjoyed good health and have never had any problems with my teeth: Smoking will not affect me!

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 if you have gum disease, it can be detected and 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 Gum 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 cigarettes will diminish the healing capacity of oral tissues and reduce body resistance. Thus, regardless of the oral hygiene condition of the smoker, his chance of developing gum disease is increased!

I've already got gum disease, it might be too late to quit smoking!

It's never too late! You can prevent the gum disease from progressing. You should quit smoking immediately and go to your dentist for treatment.

For the benefit of your oral health, we recommend that you should 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 plan to quit smoking by changing those habits that would encourage smoking!

Persevere:

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

Seek help:

If you need any support and assistance, please call the “Integrated Smoking Cessation Hotline of the Department of Health” at 1833 183.

Website of Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office of Department of Health: www.taco.gov.hk