

4. Gingivectomy is the surgical removal of the periodontal pocket to allow easier access for cleaning.

5. Flap surgery allows us to gain access to the root of the tooth for removal of calculus, plaque and diseased tissue. The gum is then secured back into place.

A Final Word

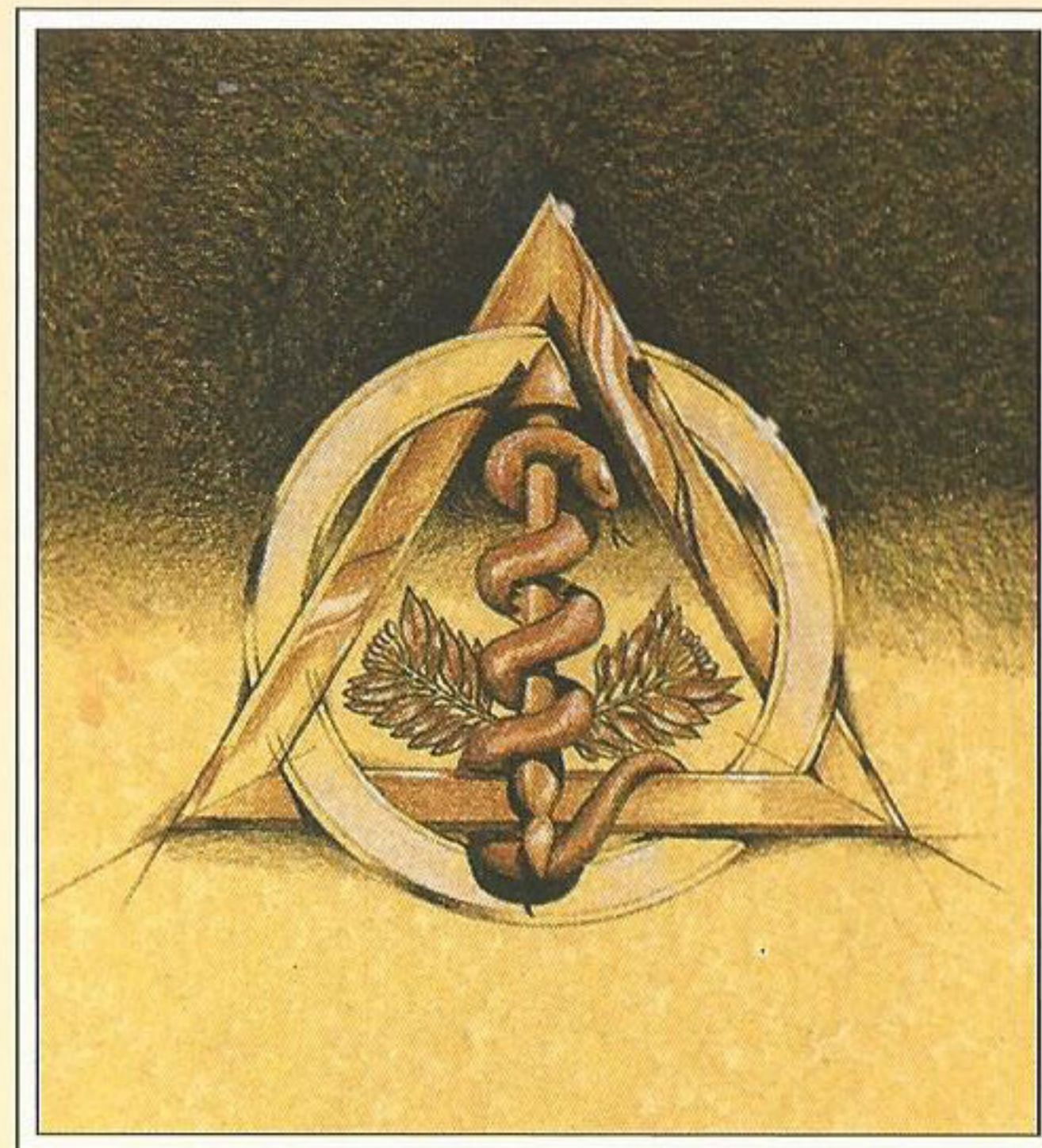
Each of us is different, and so is our individual ability to resist diseases. Some patients are more susceptible than others to periodontal disease. Fortunately, you don't have to lose your teeth to gum disease. With today's state-of-the-art treatment procedures, you can feel assured that most teeth can be saved.

Good periodontal health starts with you. Here's what you can do to prevent or control gum disease:

1. Thoroughly brush and floss your teeth every day.
2. Eat a well-balanced diet, avoiding sticky sweets and junk food.
3. Examine your mouth routinely for any early signs of gum disease or other oral changes.
4. Visit us at least twice a year for a thorough cleaning and oral examination.

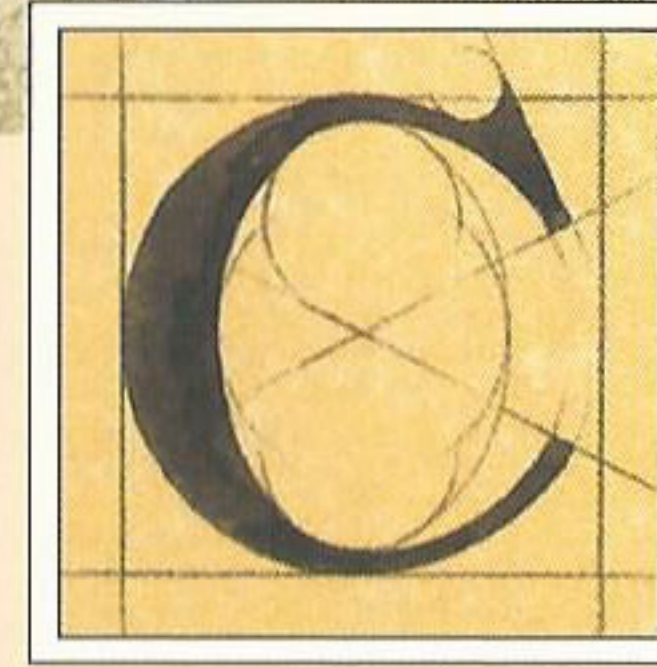
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Medical illustrations by May Cheney.

GUM DISEASE



A SMARTPATIENT™ GUIDE

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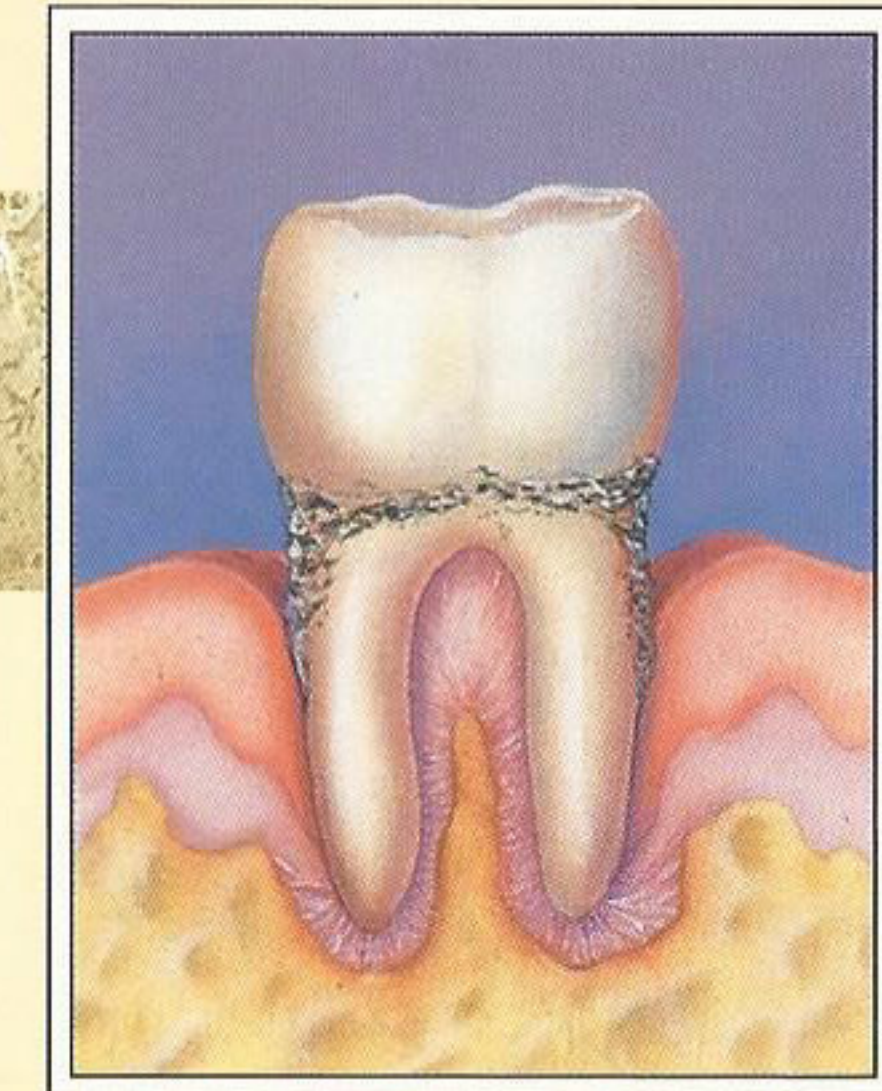
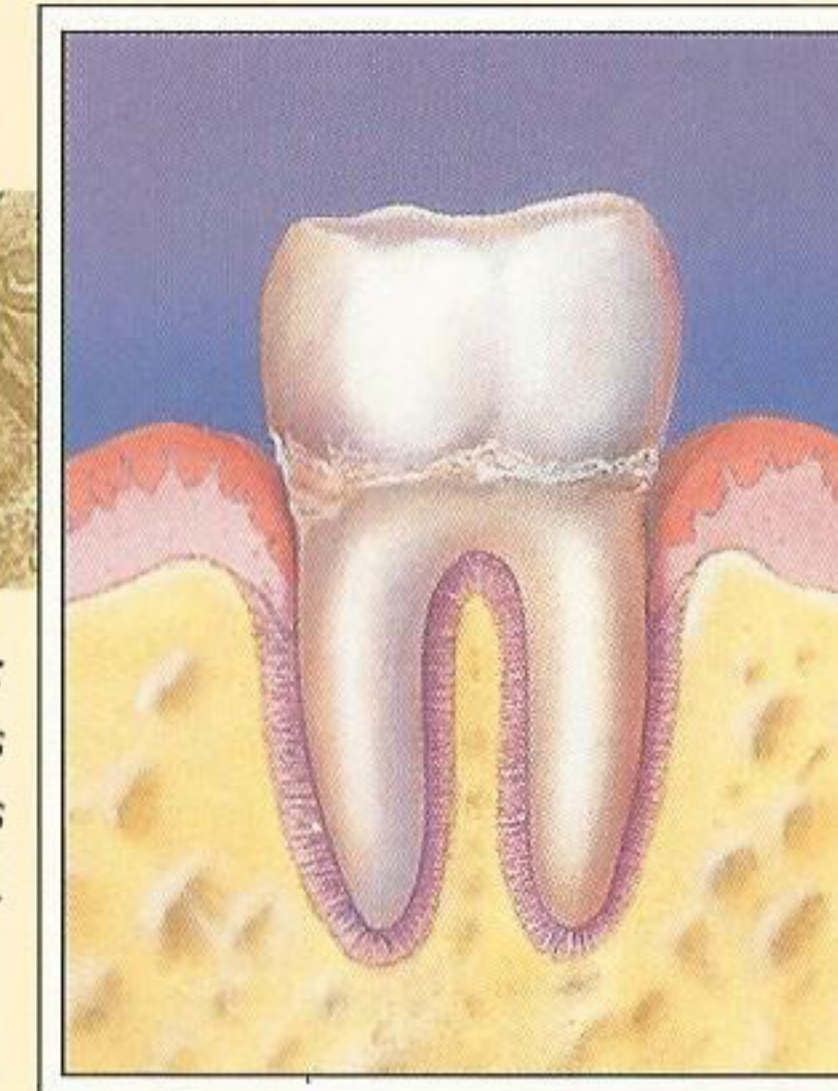


Chances are you or a family member have some stage of gum (periodontal) disease. Relax. While many adults do develop some degree of periodontal disease as part of the aging process, there are steps you can take to prevent it.

In this brochure we have compiled the latest information about periodontal health – information you can use to retain your smile for a lifetime.



*Gingivitis:
Gum tissue is
inflamed and bleeds
when probed.*



*Severe Periodontitis:
Supporting gum tissues
have deteriorated;
tooth loosens.*

You may have periodontal disease and not realize it. This disease is the primary cause of the loss of teeth after age 35. If caught in its early stages, however, periodontal disease can be reversed with proper care.

Periodontal disease, or simply gum disease, is the single most common cause of tooth loss in adults. This inflammatory disease attacks the gums, bone and other supporting structures of the teeth.

Gum disease is caused by plaque, a colorless film of bacteria that forms on the teeth. Plaque mixes with sugars and starches in the diet to form acids and other by-products in the mouth, irritating the gums and causing them to become red, tender and swollen. It also causes the gums to bleed easily. If not removed daily, plaque hardens to form calculus (tartar) around the necks of the teeth.

The tissue that attaches the gums to the teeth can be destroyed by the irritants in plaque. The gums pull away from the teeth and small pockets form between the teeth and gums. These pockets become filled with more plaque. As the pockets deepen, it becomes impossible for you to clean the plaque out. Eventually, the bone structure supporting the teeth can be destroyed.

Other Causes of Periodontal Disease

1. Physical and chemical irritants — Impacted food, tobacco products, alcohol and the improper use of dental floss or toothpicks may irritate gum tissue.

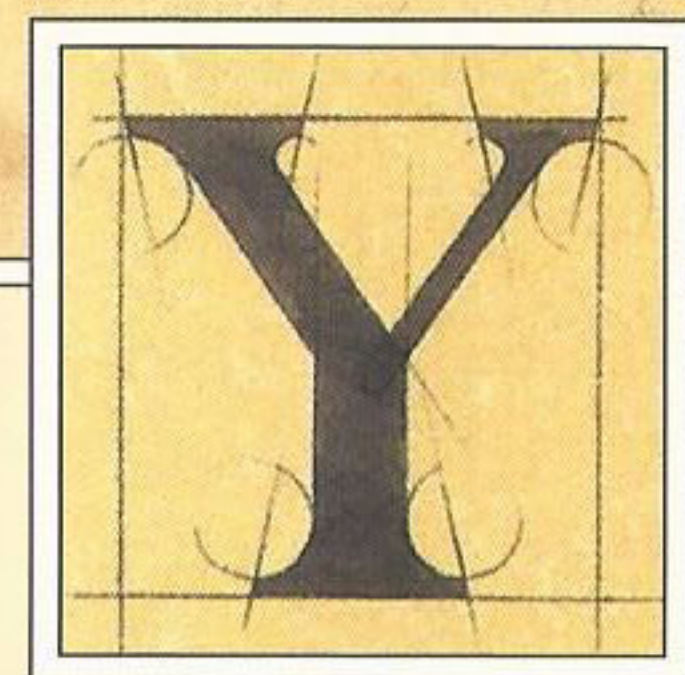
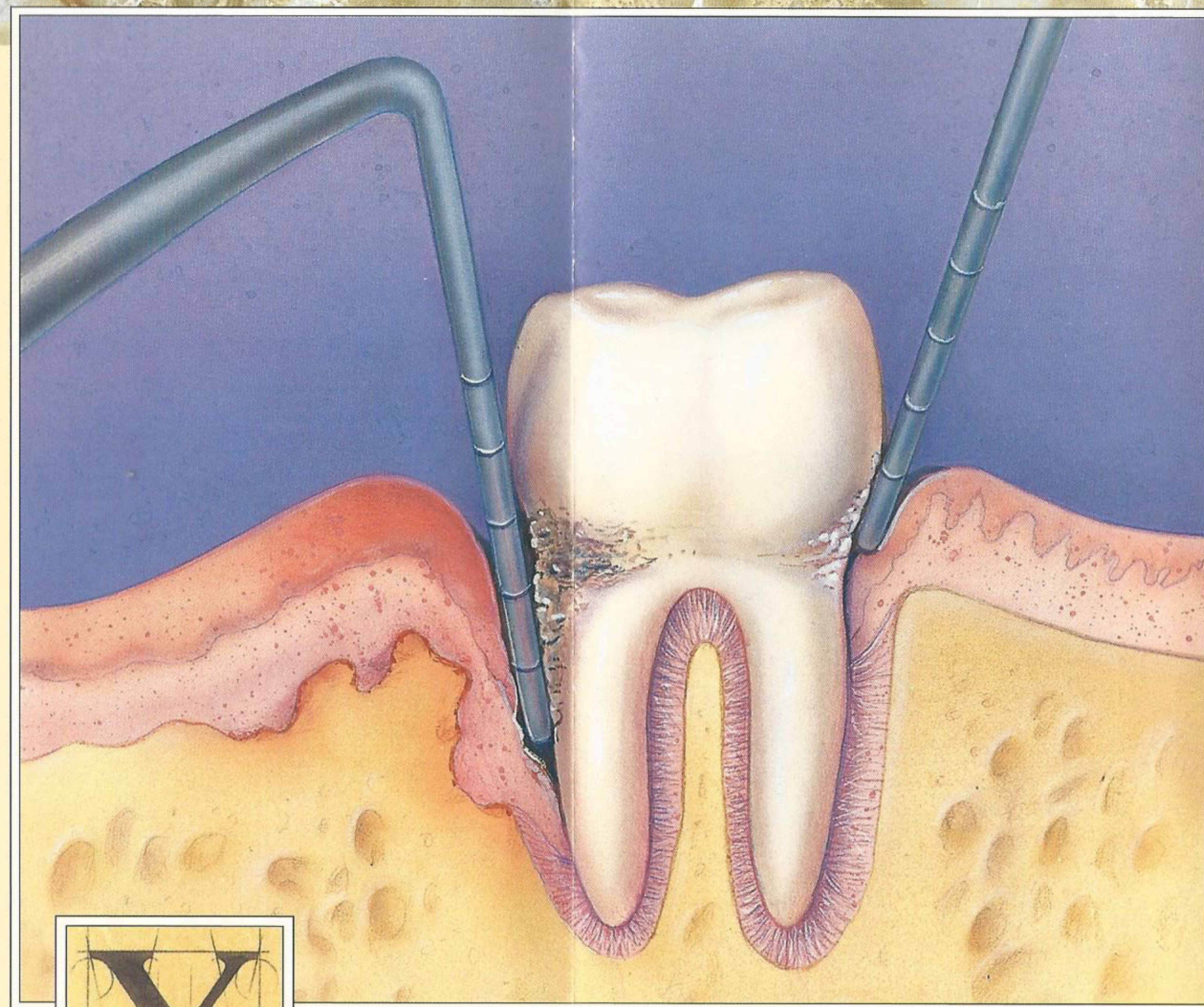
2. Abnormal oral conditions or habits — Badly aligned teeth, poorly fitting bridges or partial dentures, defective fillings and harmful habits, such as grinding the teeth and chewing ice, can also cause problems.

3. Unbalanced diet — Evidence shows a link between nutritional deficiency and the body's ability to fight off infection.

4. Pregnancy — Due to fluctuations in hormone levels, a temporary condition referred to as "pregnancy gingivitis" may occur.

5. Certain medications — Oral contraceptives, anti-epilepsy drugs, steroids and cancer therapy drugs may have a negative affect.

6. Certain diseases — Diabetes, uremia, liver cirrhosis, anemia and leukemia are among the many diseases that may affect the health of your gums.



You need not lose your teeth to gum disease. With today's state-of-the-art treatment procedures, most teeth can be saved.

What Are the Signs?

- Gums that bleed when you brush or floss your teeth
- Red, swollen or tender gums
- Gums that have receded or shrunken away from your teeth
- Pus between your teeth when you press your gums with your finger
- Pain when chewing
- Calculus or tartar buildup

- Teeth that seem loose or that change position
- Changes in your bite
- Changes in the way your partial dentures fit
- Bad breath or a chronic bad taste in your mouth
- Teeth that are overly sensitive to hot and cold

Diagnosis

A thorough oral examination, including x-rays, is crucial to diagnosing periodontal disease. In most cases, we recommend an in-office exam and tooth cleaning for all adults twice a year. At that time, we may use a special instrument called a periodontal probe to measure the depth of the pocket between the tooth and the gum tissue. The pocket depth measurement, clinical examination and x-rays help us determine the precise location, extent and severity of gum disease.

Treatment

The type of treatment you require depends on how advanced your particular case is. Individualized treatment may include any of the following:

1. More frequent cleanings. It may take the bacteria at the base of the pocket up to three months to colonize into numbers able to destroy bone. Frequent cleanings can prevent this buildup.
2. Scaling and root planing. Scaling is removing the calculus deposits from your teeth. Root planing is the smoothing of the root surfaces so that the gum tissue can reattach to the tooth.
3. Curettage removes the soft tissue lining the periodontal pocket. This helps the gum tissue to heal.