

What is my role in managing my periodontal disease?

Periodontal disease is a chronic incurable condition. The disease can be managed with **consistent daily care by you**, and in most cases will be controlled.

Inadequate care will mean the disease will worsen, further bone support will be destroyed and teeth will become loose and may fall out. Uncontrolled periodontal disease is linked to diabetes, heart disease and poorer life expectancy.

Summary

- **Clean your teeth thoroughly twice a day (using a fluoride and triclosan containing toothpaste)**
- **Clean between your teeth every day**
- **Have a healthy lifestyle**
- **Eat a healthy diet**
- **Do not smoke**
- **Visit the dentist/hygienist regularly (every 3 or 6 months as advised by your dentist)**

What is the best way to clean my teeth?

Tooth brushing

- Brush for at least 3 minutes twice a day
- Tilt the toothbrush at 45° to the tooth
- Concentrate on the gum line
- Be systematic – work from one side of the mouth all the way around and back again
- Use a pea sized amount of fluoride and triclosan containing toothpaste
- If using a manual tooth brush, brush gently in small circles, if using an electric toothbrush allow the brush to brush for you and avoid pressing hard

Follow the advice given to you by your hygienist on the best toothbrush for you. If choosing an electric toothbrush invest in one with a timer and a small oscillating head.

Remember bleeding gums are a sign of active disease and these areas need cleaning more thoroughly.

Interdental cleaning

It is essential that you clean between all your teeth every day. Please follow the advice of your hygienist for the best way to do this.

What is a Healthy lifestyle?

In general, a healthy person

- doesn't smoke,
- is at a healthy weight,
- eats a healthy diet,
- exercises regularly and
- gets enough sleep.

If you are diabetic poor control over your blood sugar will cause worsening of your periodontal disease (HbA1c levels should be 6.5% or less). Follow your doctor's advice on controlling your diabetes.

What is a healthy diet?

Eating a diet containing foods naturally rich in antioxidants (vitamin C) and omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids is beneficial.

- Eat lots of fruit and vegetables – at least 5 portions a day, ideally 7-9
- Eat oily fish at least twice a week
- Avoid foods high in refined carbohydrates (sugar/glucose), eat whole grain foods instead

Final Thoughts

Take responsibility for your disease and remain motivated.
Follow the advice given by your dentist and hygienist.

Further Information/References

Advice on healthy eating @
www.eatwell.gov.uk/healthydiet/

Advice on how to stop smoking @
<http://smokefree.nhs.uk/>

NHS Stop Smoking Helpline:
0800 022 4332

Advice on interdental cleaning @
<http://www.toothbrushdirect.co.uk/golden-rules-for-interdental-cleaning.html>

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01384 292666

Wall Heath Dental Practice
7 High Street
Wall Heath
West Midlands
DY6 0HA

Tel: 01384 292666
email: info@wallheathdental.co.uk
www.wallheathdental.co.uk