



# What You Should Know About: Periodontal Disease, Prevention, and You

## Be Your Own Health Advocate!

- Your Medicaid benefits include dental coverage.
- Use your dental benefits to help you have a healthy mouth.

## These Medicaid dental benefits can help you prevent periodontal disease:

- Routine dental exams, x-rays, and cleanings
- Counseling to help you quit smoking.

 *If you have any questions about using your benefits, call the phone number listed on the back of your Medicaid card.*



## UNDERSTANDING PERIODONTAL DISEASE

### Did you know...?

- Periodontitis is also called **gum disease**. It is a serious gum infection.
- Periodontal disease is caused by **PLAQUE**. Plaque is a soft, sticky layer of bacteria that can build up on your teeth.
- Plaque damages the soft tissue. Without treatment, it can destroy the bone that supports your teeth. This may lead to teeth that are loose and sensitive and/or tooth loss.

### Four Stages of Periodontal Disease:

#### Stage 1: Gingivitis

- Inflammation of the gingiva (gums) without bone loss.

#### Stage 2: Early Periodontitis

- Inflammation of the gums and the surrounding tissues that results in early bone loss.

#### Stage 3: Moderate Periodontitis

- Inflammation of the gums and the surrounding tissues that results in moderate bone loss.

#### Stage 4: Advanced Periodontitis

- Inflammation of the gums and the surrounding tissues that results in severe bone loss.

### Other Types of Periodontal Disease:

#### Acute Necrotizing Ulcerative Gingivitis (ANUG)

- A severe and painful type of periodontal disease that results in deep sores in the mouth. It is usually caused by poor oral hygiene and poor diet.

#### Pregnancy Gingivitis

- Common in pregnant women and caused by hormonal changes during pregnancy.

### Warning Signs of Periodontal Disease:

- Bad breath that does not go away
- Red, swollen, or bleeding gums
- Receding gums or teeth that appear longer
- Painful chewing
- Loose or sensitive teeth

### Risks Factors for Periodontal Disease:

- Poor oral hygiene
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Taking medications that cause dry mouth
- Female hormonal changes, such as with pregnancy or the use of oral contraceptives
- Underlying immunodeficiency (example, AIDS)
- Heredity
- Stress



Get rid of **PLAQUE**.  
Brush twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.



See your dentist regularly for routine exams, x-rays, and cleanings.



Eat a healthy diet of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.



Clean or floss between your teeth every day.



Try counseling to help you quit smoking.

## PREVENTING PERIODONTAL DISEASE

What can you do?