

*5 Dangers of*

# **GUM DISEASE**

**AND HOW TO STOP IT NATURALLY**



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## ABOUT JONATHAN LANDSMAN

As the creator of NaturalHealth365 Programs, I've worked with some of the brightest minds in natural health and science. Having been in the health and fitness industry for over 35 years, I've produced over 500 health programs with over 300 of the finest integrative healthcare providers in the world.



Reaching millions of people, worldwide, I am committed to educating the public about the importance of eating a healthy, organic (non-GMO) diet; consuming high-quality nutritional supplements, as needed and participating in healthy lifestyle habits like, exercise, detoxification protocols and mind/body work, on a regular basis.

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A shocking 46 percent - almost half! - of American adults over age 30 are currently living with gum disease.<sup>1</sup> The unfortunate truth is that poor dental hygiene and gum disease (also known as periodontal disease) affect far more than just the mouth.

In addition to causing tooth loss, pain and difficulties in chewing food, gum disease can result in self-consciousness and social anxiety, contribute to isolation and social withdrawal - and even play a role in the development of some of the deadliest chronic degenerative diseases of our time.

Keep in mind, the risk of gum disease appears to worsen as people age. In fact, researchers report that elderly individuals are at heightened risk, with the prevalence of periodontal disease increasing to 68 percent in those over age 65.<sup>2</sup> Sadly, those enjoying their “golden years” are particularly vulnerable to having their health and happiness destroyed by the effects of gum disease.

## **CAUTION: FIND OUT WHAT UNTREATED GUM DISEASE CAN DO TO YOUR TEETH**

Gum disease exists in two primary forms: gingivitis - an earlier, milder condition - and a more severe form known as periodontitis.

Gingivitis begins with the buildup of plaque - sticky deposits of bacteria that form on teeth and gums. Unless plaque is promptly removed, it hardens into tartar, which causes gums to become irritated and inflamed.

The gums begin to lose the appearance of healthy tissue - pale pink, firm and fitting snugly around the teeth - and become swollen and darker in color, even displaying a deep, dusky red. Other telltale signs of gingivitis include painful gums, bad breath, sensitivity to hot and cold and bleeding after brushing.<sup>3</sup>

Untreated gingivitis can progress to periodontitis, an even more serious form of gum disease that can cause the



loss of both teeth and surrounding bone. In truth, the signs of periodontitis resemble those of gingivitis, but can also include receding gums - which pull away from the teeth and make them appear longer - loose teeth, tilting teeth and increased risk of infections and dental abscesses.<sup>4</sup>

Usually, poor oral hygiene - namely: insufficient brushing and flossing - lies at the heart of gum disease. Smoking cigarettes, having “dry mouth” and taking certain medications can also help set the stage for gingivitis and periodontitis.

## **WARNING: GUM DISEASE CAN DRAMATICALLY INCREASE THE RISK OF SERIOUS HEART PROBLEMS**

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that heart disease is currently the leading cause of mortality in the United States, claiming roughly 655,000 lives every year.<sup>5</sup> Significantly, heart disease is more likely to occur in people with inadequate dental hygiene and poor dental health.

Research has shown a link between gingivitis and systemic chronic inflammation, which is believed to contribute to cardiovascular disease. Bacteria involved in gum disease may also contribute to heart disease by “hyping up” the immune response in the body. Finally, bacteria from the gums can sometimes make their way into heart tissue and heart valves, causing a disease known as infective endocarditis.



In a University of Toronto study published in *Journal of Dental Research*, researchers induced periodontal disease in animals - and found elevated amounts of immune cells in bone marrow, suggesting that gum disease could set off a hyperinflammatory response. While these immune cells - known as neutrophils - are designed to fight off bacteria, excessive amounts can “prime” the immune system to attack, resulting in damage to the heart, blood vessels and brain.



When the researchers induced gingivitis in volunteers, they found that gum disease caused increased activation of neutrophils in humans, as well. However, the abnormal neutrophil activity reverted to normal when the gingivitis was resolved.<sup>6</sup>

**The good news here: Improved oral hygiene can help reverse gingivitis - in the early stages at least - thereby preserving teeth and potentially warding off heart disease.**

## **HEALTH ALERT: ORAL BACTERIA IN THE BLOODSTREAM CAN CAUSE DEVASTATING CIRCULATION ISSUES**

A recent study has revealed that oral bacteria from gum disease may play a role in triggering strokes.

Strokes, which occur when the blood supply to the brain is blocked or reduced, can cause partial paralysis, impairments in speech and memory - and even premature death. The World Stroke Organization reports the sobering fact that 1 in 6 people around the globe will likely experience one of these potentially fatal events in their lifetime.

**In fact, every year 13.7 million people worldwide have their first stroke, and 5.5 million do not survive.<sup>7</sup>**

In peer-reviewed research publicized in the prestigious Journal of the American Heart Association, scientists assessed blood clot samples derived from 75 volunteers who had suffered strokes. And, the team found that nearly 80 percent of the patients' samples contained evidence of oral bacteria from a group of pathogens known as viridans streptococci.

In addition, more viridans streptococci were found in the stroke-causing clots than in blood samples taken from other sites in the body, leading the team to speculate that these bacteria could contribute to the thrombotic (clot-related) events of cerebrovascular diseases.



“Regular dental care,” concluded the researchers, “should be emphasized in the primary prevention of ischemic stroke.”<sup>8</sup>

Is the prevention of gum disease through conscientious dental care starting to sound like a repetitive theme? That’s because scientists have learned that conscientious dental care is, in fact, the best weapon against periodontal conditions.

Sadly, heart attacks and strokes are not the only diseases to be triggered by poor oral health.

## **“VICIOUS CYCLE” – THE UGLY LINK BETWEEN ARTHRITIS AND GUM DISEASE**

With rheumatoid arthritis (RA), the tissues that cushion the joints are attacked by the body’s own immune system, causing the destruction of cartilage, ligaments and bone and leading to pain, stiffness and disability.

Studies have shown that RA patients are a stunning four times more likely to develop gum disease than people free of RA.<sup>9</sup> While the association could be due to genetics - with some people simply more likely to develop both conditions - some researchers believe other factors may be at work as well.

For instance, having RA could cause problems that make cleaning the teeth more difficult, leading to more plaque left in the mouth and raising the risk of developing gum disease.

Simply put, in a destructive “feedback loop,” gum disease can actually worsen RA.

In a review published in *Current Opinion in Rheumatology*, researchers found *P. gingivalis*, the primary pathogen in gum disease, in both the gum tissues and the synovial (joint) fluid of RA patients. *P. gingivalis* can modify specific proteins, causing the body to launch an autoimmune response and creating joint damage in individuals already susceptible to RA.



The scientists concluded that *P. gingivalis* can lead to earlier development, faster progression and greater severity of RA.<sup>10</sup>

So, this is just another example of a debilitating health condition that can be triggered or worsened by gum disease!

To be clear: The treatment of gum disease can improve an RA condition ... simply because it reduces the inflammatory burden on the body. So, if you have been diagnosed with RA, it is of paramount importance to visit your biological dentist – as soon as possible – to create a proper gum disease treatment plan.

## **DON'T FORGET THIS: GUM DISEASE IS LINKED TO POOR BRAIN FUNCTION**

According to the CDC, 6.2 million Americans are now living with Alzheimer's disease.<sup>11</sup> A recent study conducted at the University of California and published in *Science Advances* revealed a potential link between *P. gingivalis* bacteria and the development and progression of this debilitating condition.

Researchers analyzed brain tissue, spinal fluid and saliva from Alzheimer's patients - both living and deceased - and discovered gingipain (a toxic byproduct of *P. gingivalis*) in a shocking 96 percent of the brain tissue samples.<sup>12</sup> Not only can gingipains destroy brain neurons, but *P. gingivalis* pathogens have been shown to promote the accumulation in the brain of amyloid plaques linked to Alzheimer's disease.

As if the above study didn't provide enough motivation to practice good oral hygiene, there is yet another mechanism by which good oral care lowers the risk of dementia. Basically, improved oral hygiene can lead to improved cardiovascular health, which in turn can benefit mental status.

In a landmark study published in the *British medical journal* (BMJ), researchers found that good heart health at age 50 was associated with a lower incidence of dementia later in life.<sup>13</sup>

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Microorganisms and bacterial biofilms in dental plaque cause a number of oral health concerns that can lead to systemic health challenges.

Use of the broad-spectrum botanicals in Dentalcidin™ can assist in removing biofilms and plaque and are an excellent way to promote and maintain healthy teeth and gums.

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## **AVOID LOSING YOUR TEETH AND REDUCE THE RISK OF INFECTIONS**

Gum disease, and the bacteria-laden plaque that accompanies it, can lead to spaces around the teeth called periodontal pockets. If untreated, these can become inflamed and eventually cause tooth loss, an obvious - and very visible - consequence of gum disease.

Another possible effect of gum disease is the formation of abscesses - pockets of pus that develop inside the teeth, gums or bone. Dental abscesses, which may feature fever, swollen lymph nodes and facial swelling, can cause serious and even life-threatening complications.

Make no mistake about it, severe gum pockets that are infected require immediate treatment by a qualified dentist.

And, although cavities are caused by a different type of bacteria than those behind gum disease - these, too, can play a role in periodontal conditions.

Your first order of business with a toothache is to contact your biological dentist for an appointment. While you are waiting to be seen, however, these natural interventions may help provide a measure of relief.

### **EUGENOL: THE “HEAVYWEIGHT” OF NATURAL TOOTHACHE RELIEF**

Cloves and clove oil, which contain a compound known as eugenol, are a trusted natural remedy for dental problems. Eugenol has all the right “anti’s” to fight infection and inflammation, with studies showing that it is antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antibacterial and analgesic.

Research has demonstrated that eugenol, when applied to the gums after tooth extraction, significantly reduces pain and inflammation during healing. In one study, eugenol even outperformed chlorhexidine (the pharmaceutical “gold standard” of gingivitis treatments) in preventing painful post-extraction “dry socket,” or alveolar osteitis.<sup>14</sup>



To access the healing power of eugenol, simply dilute a few drops of essential oil of cloves in a half teaspoon of olive oil, soak a cotton ball, and hold it firmly against the affected tooth.

## **EASE PAINFUL TEETH AND GUMS WITH CHAMOMILE TEA**

Chamomile tea, a trusted herbal remedy for indigestion, can be your best friend in times of toothache. This delicate-tasting drink is soothing to a traumatized palate or gums - and has the therapeutic “chops” to help improve gum health.

Chamomile’s active ingredient, chamazulene, is antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory, making it a good choice for treating pain and infection.<sup>15</sup>

To make a toothache-soothing remedy, simply put a chamomile teabag in boiling water, steep for a few minutes, allow it to cool, and place it directly on the affected tooth.

## **PEPPERMINT TEA CONTAINS POTENT PAIN-KILLING COMPOUNDS**

Peppermint tea rivals chamomile tea in its ability to soothe gums and relieve tooth pain. The “secret weapons” of peppermint are menthol and menthone, a pair of volatile oils with numbing and cooling properties.

For good measure, peppermint also contains a pair of powerful antioxidant compounds: limonene - also found in citrus fruits - and 1,8-cineole, which is present in the herbs cinnamon, ginger and rosemary.<sup>16</sup>



## **TIME-HONORED BIBLICAL SPICE EARNS CREDIT FOR CONTEMPORARY TOOTHACHE RELIEF**

Myrrh, botanically known as *Commiphora myrrha*, is mentioned in the Bible as one of the gifts of the Wise Men for the infant Jesus. This ancient herb has astringent, anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial effects, and has been



utilized in both Ayurvedic healing systems and traditional Chinese medicine to treat a range of dental problems, including inflamed gums, toothache, and cracked or chipped teeth.

Myrrh is available as a tincture, which can be mixed with a few drops of water and applied to the painful tooth with a cotton ball. However, check first with your biological dentist before using myrrh to treat a toothache. Myrrh is not intended for long-term use, nor should it be used by anyone with kidney disease.<sup>17</sup>

## **DISCOVER AN OLD-FASHIONED SALTY HOME REMEDY FOR SAFE AND FAST RELIEF**

Believe it or not, half a teaspoon of sea salt dissolved in a cup of warm (not hot) water, and swished for 30 seconds in your mouth, can offer dramatic - if temporary - toothache relief. This time-honored treatment can balance the pH of your mouth in a way that discourages the growth of bacteria, while lowering bacterial counts in saliva.<sup>18</sup>

Not only does the salt have antibiotic effects, but the gentle swishing action of the warm water can dislodge food particles stuck between the teeth - which could be worsening the pain. By the way, popcorn hulls and fibers from raw mango are two common culprits. You can repeat this treatment three to four times a day.

## **HOW CAN HYDROGEN PEROXIDE REDUCE TOOTHACHE PAIN?**

Gargling with food-grade 3 percent hydrogen peroxide, diluted half and half with warm water, has long been a trusted remedy for toothache pain. Simply swish the mixture in your mouth for 30 seconds, (being careful not to swallow it), then spit it out.

In a review published in Journal of the International Society of Preventive Community

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Dentistry, researchers found that rinsing with a hydrogen peroxide mouthwash helped reduce dental plaque and decreased symptoms of periodontitis, including sensitivity, pain, bleeding gums and tooth loss. The team also noted that hydrogen peroxide possesses a wide spectrum of antibacterial activity.<sup>19</sup>

While the natural solutions listed above can help alleviate tooth pain, don't overlook the power of nutrients and vitamins to support gum health and discourage periodontal disease. Remember, when it comes to the health of your teeth and gums, an ounce of prevention really is worth a pound of cure.

## **CALCIUM-RICH FOODS, THE “SUNSHINE VITAMIN” AND VITAMIN C TEAM UP TO PROMOTE HEALTHY TEETH AND GUMS**

Calcium is vital for the formation of strong bones and teeth. While this essential mineral is all-important for dental health, many natural health experts advise against calcium supplementation - which may lead to heart attacks and other health problems.

Instead, integrative healthcare providers tend to recommend eating foods naturally high in calcium, such as organic dark, leafy green vegetables, wild-caught salmon, sardines (with the bones left in) broccoli and chia seeds.

It's also important to maintain healthy levels of vitamin D, which works in concert with calcium to mineralize teeth. As vitamin D is made in the skin in response to sunshine, the best source is direct sunlight, with experts advising 20 minutes of exposure three times a week. But, unlike calcium, vitamin D3 can be taken as a supplement.

Because optimal supplement serving sizes may vary due to your age, body weight and health status, you should consult with an integrative physician before supplementing.<sup>20</sup>

Most importantly, in terms of vitamin supplementation, don't forget to increase your vitamin C intake. In a study published in *Nutrition Reviews*, researchers found that shortages of this nutrient can be an underlying cause of bleeding gums.



You can increase your intake of vitamin C by eating more citrus fruits, bell peppers, strawberries and broccoli.<sup>21</sup> But, of course, many people would benefit from a high quality, vitamin C supplement to correct deficiencies that are commonly found in today's population.

## HOW DOES COQ10 HELP TO REPAIR GUM TISSUE?

Coenzyme Q10, a fat-soluble vitamin-like nutrient, is essential to the health of tissues, leading many natural health experts to advise this antioxidant enzyme to alleviate bleeding gums and combat periodontal bone loss. You can increase your dietary intake of CoQ10 with grass-fed organ meats; organic spinach and a clean source of sardines.

CoQ10 is also available as a supplement under the name Ubiquinol, with natural healers advising serving sizes of 60 to 600 mg a day. Check with your integrative doctor before supplementing with CoQ10.<sup>22</sup>

## THIS TRADITIONAL AYURVEDIC TREATMENT IS FANTASTIC FOR HEALTHY TEETH AND GUMS

Oil pulling - the act of swishing sesame oil or coconut oil around in the mouth - has been shown to be effective in killing harmful gum bacteria. An older (but still influential) 2009 study showed that merely swishing a tablespoonful of sesame oil in the mouth reduced plaque and bacteria as much as a commercial mouthwash!<sup>23</sup>



## DON'T OVERLOOK THE "HOLY GRAIL" OF GUM HEALTH

It's not glamorous, and it's certainly not complicated or sophisticated. But, consistent, daily brushing of your teeth is a great way to reduce the risk of gum disease.

Use a soft-bristled toothbrush and brush for at least two minutes, accessing both the fronts and backs of teeth while moving away from the gum line.



Here's a "pro tip:" Try adding some herbal toothpaste to your brush, and look for a brand containing xylitol, a natural plaque-fighting compound found in berries and plums. If you don't want to use toothpaste, try adding a drop of essential oils on your brush like, neem, peppermint or clove.

Beware of being too aggressive with your brushing technique. Scrubbing too hard at your teeth can wear down the enamel, making them vulnerable to staining and damage.

Experts recommend cleaning your teeth at least twice a day - after every meal is even better! - and flossing at least once a day. In addition, an irrigation device - such as the Hydro Floss – can do wonders for cleaning below the gum line where your toothbrush can't reach.<sup>24</sup>

While regular brushing and flossing is the gold standard for avoiding gum disease, you should also see an experienced biological dentist (regularly) for the removal of any hardened plaque you may have missed.

Avoiding smoking, eating a healthy diet and minimizing the consumption of sugary foods, excessively sweet drinks (i.e. soda) and highly processed foods can all help to decrease the risk of gum disease.

In the end, your very best weapons against gum disease - a toothbrush, herbal toothpaste, dental floss, a dental irrigator - are inexpensive, effective and easy to use. When it comes to combating periodontal disease, these everyday items pack a powerful punch.

Best of all, all these natural and safe remedies can help protect one of your most valuable assets: a bright and healthy smile.



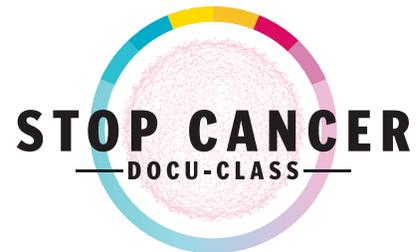
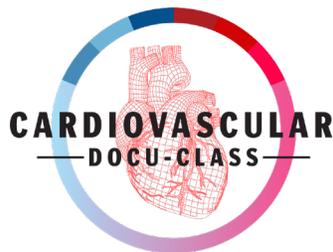


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