

Signs and symptoms of gingivitis

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Gingivitis is a common and mild form of gum disease (periodontal disease) that causes irritation, redness, and swelling (inflammation) of your gingiva, the part of your gums around the base of your teeth. Gingivitis can lead to more severe gum disease called periodontitis and tooth loss.



What are the signs and symptoms of gingivitis?

Healthy gums are firm and pale pink and fitted tightly around the teeth. However, the signs and symptoms of gingivitis include:

- Swollen or puffy gums
- Dusky red or dark red gums
- Gums that bleed when you brush or floss
- Bad breath
- Receding gums
- Tender gums

What is the leading cause of gingivitis?

The most common cause of gingivitis is poor oral hygiene. Your gums attach to the teeth at a lower point than the gum edges; this forms a small space called a sulcus. Food and plaque can get trapped in this space and cause a gum infection or gingivitis. If left unchecked, gingivitis can cause the gums to separate from the teeth, causing:

- Injury to the soft tissue and bone supporting the teeth
- The tooth becomes loose and unstable
- The loss of the tooth if the infection progresses

What is the fastest way to cure gingivitis?

Eliminating gingivitis takes about two weeks; treating it quickly can reverse it and prevent periodontitis. Tips to help you cure gingivitis:

- Brush your teeth at least twice a day. If you can, brush after each meal.

- Opt for an electric toothbrush to maximize your cleaning potential.
- Make sure your toothbrush has soft or extra-soft bristles.
- Replace your toothbrush every three months.
- Floss daily.
- Use a mouthwash or rinse with salt water.
- Visit your dentist at least once a year.
- Refrain from smoking or chewing tobacco.
- Limit sugar your sugar intake.

How is gingivitis detected?

Gingivitis is commonly diagnosed with a dental exam; your dentist typically checks:

- Gum bleeding, swelling, firmness, and pocket depth (the space between the gum and tooth; the larger and deeper the pocket, the more severe the disease).
- Teeth movement, sensitivity, and correct teeth alignment.
- Your jawbone as it helps detect the breakdown of bone surrounding your teeth.
- Using a probe, your dentist will determine the severity of your gum disease by measuring pockets in your gums and deciding if further tests are required.

The sooner gingivitis is treated, the better your chance of making a quick and complete recovery. If left untreated, gingivitis can cause severe damage to your teeth and lead to other health problems. Consult an Intercare dentist if you have:

- Severe tooth pain
- Bad breath
- Gums that bleed a lot
- Extremely swollen or inflamed gums
- Good oral health habits, such as brushing at least twice daily, flossing daily, and getting regular dental check-ups, can help prevent and reverse gingivitis.

Sources

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