

“Have You Been SCAMMED by Gum Disease?”

By Vicky Flint, RDH

A Reader (and new client) asked: “I’ve been going to the dentist every 6 months faithfully. I just moved here and now I’m **being told I have gum disease**. They say I need some sort of super-deep cleaning with shots to numb me up. It’s very expensive, about \$1200! **How can this be?”**

Sadly, there are **2 ways you can be "scammed"** by gum disease. **One is to not have it but be told that you do**. This creates about \$1200 of unnecessary expense for you, not to mention the 4 hours of unnecessary time in the dental chair.

The second way to be "scammed" by gum disease is to have it and not be told that you do.

Missing this diagnosis can be very costly to your health later, as bacteria from gum disease has a link to heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, and possibly obesity -- according to research.

So how do you know if you have gum disease or not?

Before I start cleaning your teeth, I take a "**Perio Probe**" (a tiny ruler), which may feel "pokey," and take **measurements around each tooth** under your gums. Some people tell me they "know" they have gum disease because their previous hygienist said they have "fours." I don't buy it. I look at **more information** than only that number.

And **what's a "four" anyway?** What does that mean? I've put together a short and simple video that demonstrates where those numbers come from and what they mean. See it at:

<http://www.DentalHygieneHaven.com/Services.htm>

The following little **flowchart will empower you to participate in the co-diagnosis** of what's happening in your mouth. It will take the mystery out of the "Do I have gum disease?" question.

A very quick dental lesson: "Probing depths" are the numbers I get from measuring with the pokey ruler. The ideal numbers are 1, 2, and 3. The depths are measured in millimeters.

1. Do I have any probing depths greater than 3mm?

If YES - go to #2. If NO - go to #8.

2. Do they bleed when Vicky takes the measurement?

If YES - go to #3. If NO - go to #7.

3. Is there any puss in that bleeding, deep, greater-than-3mm pocket?

If YES - go to #4. If NO - go to #6

4. To answer this question fully requires an x-ray of the tooth and another question: **Is the bone support around the tooth disintegrating** and going away?

If YES - go to #5. If NO - go to #6

5. The answer is YES - you have all the symptoms of gum disease, also called periodontal disease. **TAKE ACTION NOW, CALL ME RIGHT AWAY!** I will show you how to get it under control or potentially even REVERSE it!

6. The answer is PROBABLY. Depths greater than 3mm, plus bleeding is **a sign of GINGIVITIS - the first step in the gum disease process - or early gum disease**. There may be some beginning bone loss (an x-ray would be needed). If puss is present but the bone support is still good, you have an active infection. **Take action now -- CALL ME for an appointment. You don't want to mess with this!**

7. **The answer is NO, you most likely don't have gum disease.** It's not unusual to have 4- or 5mm measurements (called "pockets") that don't bleed and the gums are tight against the teeth. These may be caused by your bite or tooth position. These are healthy gums that simply have less-than-ideal numbers. **An assessment of the effectiveness of your homecare** routine will ensure that gingivitis or gum disease doesn't get a foot hold! This less-than-ideal situation makes you susceptible for gum problems and bone loss.

8. **If your probing depths are NOT greater than 3mm, you do not have gum disease.** If your gums are "snug" against the teeth, pink, and don't bleed, you have great, healthy gums. If your probing depths are NOT greater than 3mm, but you DO HAVE red, puffy gums and bleeding, you have **GINGIVITIS**. Gingivitis can be quickly reversed back to health. It can also take off into the next level of gum disease. Don't mess with it! Get it under control right away!

With this basic information with you, **there's no reason why you should ever be scammed** by inaccurate diagnosis of gum disease.

Call me for an appointment today! 970-204-0227.
I'll give you a mirror so **you can see EXACTLY** what I'm doing.
You'll see for yourself!

(c) 2008 by Victoria J. Flint, RDH, Dental Hygiene Haven

Check out Vicky's web site at: <http://www.DentalHygieneHaven.com>

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