

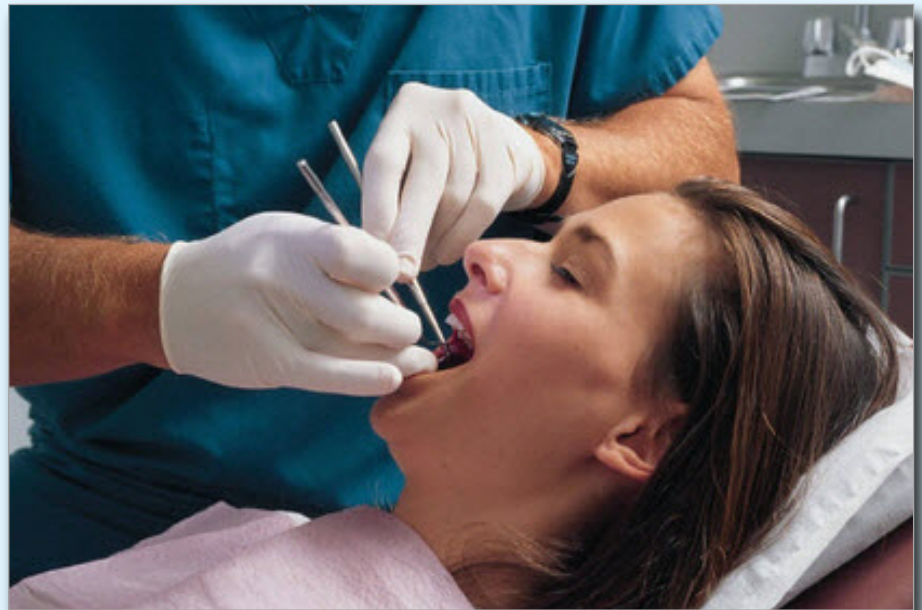
# A Wellness Approach To Periodontal Disease

*"All of us have bacteria in our mouth but conservative numbers suggest 38% of people age 20 and at least 58% aged 50 have periodontal disease."*

All of us like to have a bright smile, healthy teeth and fresh breath, but as we age things like bleeding gums, tender or swollen discolored gums increase. Bleeding signals inflammation of the gums called gingivitis which is the first step toward periodontal disease. Statistics vary but conservative numbers suggest 38% of people age 20 and at least 58% of people age 50 have periodontal disease. People in their golden years have even more problems.

All of us have bacteria in our mouth. Bacteria forms plaque around the teeth releasing enzymes called collagenases that can damage and erode the gum tissues. The infected gums swell, bleed easily, recede, and loosen teeth. Tooth loss is caused more frequently by gum disease than tooth decay.

Let me emphasize again, bleeding gums signal inflammation. And as we know, chronic inflammation is a problem and related to almost



every major disease. We are willing to spend money to have lab tests run to assess inflammation, why not pay attention to the warning signal that is flashing in our face every day.

It's not a sign of health to have bleeding, tender, or discolored gums. Remember, the mouth can be a breeding ground for infection. I say "can be" because it is normal to have bacteria in our mouth. A healthy immune system keeps the bacteria in check. However if our immune

system is compromised due to poor diet, adrenal exhaustion, toxic overload, etc, bacteria can thrive and create deeper levels of infection.

So if we see bleeding gums, we want to look for ways to support the immune system "globally." Consider that bleeding also signals capillary fragility. If the capillaries in the gums are weak, chances are good the integrity of other capillaries may be compromised. Foods and nutrients that support capillary and tissue

healing like buckwheat sprouts should be considered.

My favorite product is Bio-FCTS by Biotics Research. Bio-FCTS is a flavonoid complex of quercetin, vitamin C, buckwheat culture, green tea extract and citrus fruit.

Along with supporting the immune system "globally," we can also treat "locally." In chronic disease, "hidden" or what I call "smoldering" infections can be the turning point for recovery when identified and then eradicated.

The wake up call for me about "local" mouth infections was when a friend of mine told me she had inoperable brain cancer. She then went to a dentist who practices complimentary dentistry who found she had a leaky, infected root canal. Once the tooth was extracted and the infection cleaned up, the body healed the brain tumor in short order. That was over 10 years ago and still no sign of cancer.

This case is dramatic but illustrates how smoldering infections often trigger other conditions. As a side note, if a gum infection isn't responding to treatment, referral to a dentist who practices alternative or complementary dentistry is essential.

But what can we do "locally" to treat swollen or bleeding gums? Here's something to consider, a simple therapy that could be described as unusual, "oil pulling." Just the sound of the words "oil pulling" is a little strange. It originates from ayurvedic medicine in India and works by removing disease-causing microorganisms and toxins in the mouth that cause poor health.

What's the principle behind it? Dr. Bruce Fife in his book Oil Pulling Therapy-Detoxifying and Healing the Body Through Oral Cleansing says

"it's nothing magical, just simple biology." Most of the microorganisms that inhabit the mouth consist of a single cell. These cells are covered with a lipid or fatty membrane which is the cell's skin. When you combine 2 oils together, they are attracted to each other.

When you put oil in your mouth, the fatty membranes of the microorganisms are attracted to it. As you swish oil around your teeth and gums, microbes are picked up as though they are being drawn to a powerful magnet. Bacteria that hide under crevices in the gums and in pores within teeth are sucked out of their hiding places and held firmly in the solution. Increased saliva production is an added bonus as it also helps to fight certain microbes and balances pH.

It's best to use sesame seed or sunflower seed oil or oil that patients are not sensitive to. A safe oil to try is Sesame Seed Oil from Biotics Research. It's the only certified organic virgin sesame seed oil available to health care professionals.

But the key point is that when the body does not have the burden of constantly fighting off oral infections, bacteria and toxins, the process of self-healing begins. Inflammation diminishes, blood chemistry is normalized, damaged tissue is repaired and healing occurs.

As you screen patients, be sure to ask about symptoms like bleeding gums that reflect inflammation. Start treatment "globally" by supporting the immune system and consider "local" oral therapies. Below, I've included more details about periodontal disease and treatment options that you'll find interesting. Take a few minutes to look over the notes; for in many cases, it could be life changing.

Thanks for reading this week's Tuesday Minute edition. I'll see you again next Tuesday.