



## DENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

### BLEEDING GUMS

#### Introduction

Bleeding gums are inflamed or irritated pink tissue around the mouth that bleeds easily. Gum bleeding is a common oral health problem. If your gums bleed while brushing or flossing, you can ignore it thinking it's normal, but bleeding gums can sometimes indicate an underlying problem. Occasional bleeding from the gums can be caused by brushing your teeth too hard or wearing dentures that don't fit well



Image showing bleeding gums

#### Symptoms

Following are the symptoms-

- Signs of blood in your mouth during eating
- Signs of blood during brushing/flossing

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Image showing bleeding of gums during brushing

## Causes

Problems in maintaining dental care is the most common cause of bleeding gums. The main cause of bleeding gums is the buildup of plaque at the gum line. This will lead to a condition called gingivitis, or inflamed gums.

Plaque that is not removed will harden into tartar/calculus. This will lead to increased bleeding and a more advanced form of gum and jaw bone disease known as periodontitis.

Other causes of bleeding gums include:

- Any bleeding disorders
- Brushing too hard
- Hormonal changes during pregnancy
- Ill-fitting dentures or other dental appliances
- Improper flossing
- Infection, which can be either in a tooth or the gum
- Leukemia, a type of blood cancer
- Scurvy, a vitamin C deficiency
- Use of blood thinners

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- Vitamin K deficiency



Image showing different stages of gum diseases

## Diagnosis

The dentist can diagnose the cause of bleeding gums by visually examining the oral cavity. Visual signs such as receding gum lines, swollen gums, light bleeding from dental equipment, and cavities can help dentists easily diagnose the causes of bleeding gums. However, if your dentist notices your teeth are in good health, they will most likely recommend blood tests to help determine what could be the cause. The dentist may also ask you questions about your medical history to help identify causes. Rather, they may refer you to a general practitioner or another specialist physician to help you get an accurate diagnosis.

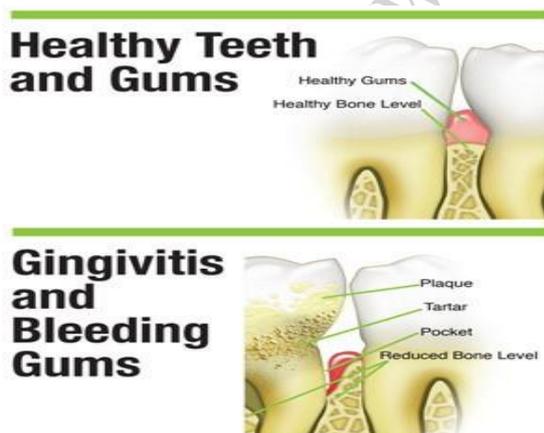


Image comparing healthy gums and problems during gum diseases.

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## Treatment

The treatment of the bleeding gums depends on the cause of it.

If the bleeding gums is due to accumulation of plaque/tartar, cleaning or scaling of teeth is the treatment advised. Visit your dentist twice per year for professional cleaning. Your dentist will let you know if you have gingivitis and teach you how to brush your teeth properly. Proper brushing and flossing can remove plaque from your gum line and reduce your risk of developing periodontal disease. Your dentist may also show you how to use an antiseptic mouthwash to minimize plaque that forms in your mouth. And a rinse of warm salt water can help soothe swollen gums that bleed easily. Use a soft toothbrush. It'll be gentle on inflamed gums, especially if you experience bleeding after brushing your teeth. Medium and hard bristles may be too abrasive for your delicate gums. You might also consider using an electric toothbrush. The specially designed brush heads on these toothbrushes can help you to clean your gum line more easily than a manual toothbrush.

If the cause is deficiency of vitamins, it's advisable to consult the dentist. Treatment for any other cause has to be first diagnosed by a dentist.



Before and after treatment (oral prophylaxis)  
images of the bleeding gums

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## **Prevention**

### **At Home**

- Practice good oral health care, including brushing twice a day and flossing once a day
- Replacement of toothbrushes every 3 to 4 months
- Eat a healthy diet that includes lots of fresh fruits and vegetables and limit processed foods and foods with added sugars
- Avoid tobacco consumption (smoking/chewing)
- Reduce stress levels
- Increase Vitamin C intake, helps strengthen immune system and fight off infection causing bleeding gums
- Increase Vitamin K intake, helps your blood clot, deficiency can cause easy bleeding
- Apply cold compress, helps restrict blood flow which will stop bleeding and also reduces swelling and inflammation
- Rinse mouth with salt water, helps decrease bacteria and improve healing of bleeding gums
- Apply turmeric paste, turmeric has natural antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties which help improve symptoms of gingival inflammation and control bleeding

### **At Clinic**

- Visit the dentist regularly, every 6 months to 1 year
- Make regular appointments with the hygienist for professional cleaning and tartar removal
- See a doctor regularly to check for health problems that may contribute to gum problems, such as diabetes
- Avoid smoking or work with a doctor to quit smoking

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When to see a doctor, see a dentist if gum bleeding doesn't improve within 7 to 10 days. You may need a deep dental cleaning to remove plaque and tartar and promote gum healing.

Your doctor may also order lab work to check for any Vitamin deficiencies that can cause gum bleeding.

## REFERENCES

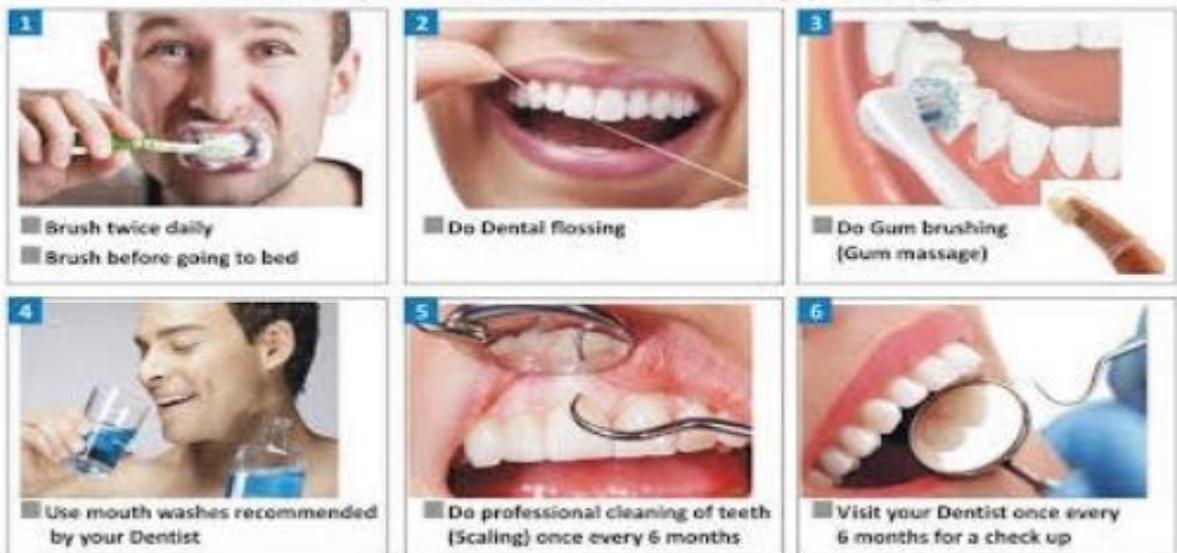
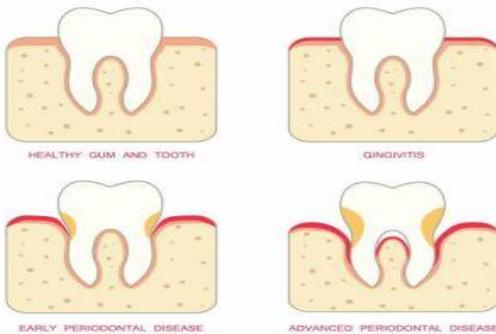
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## PERIODONTAL DISEASE



## FAQ's

1. What is bleeding gums a sign of?

The main cause of bleeding gums is plaque buildup on the gum line. This will lead to a condition called gingivitis or swollen gums. If plaque is not replaced, it may harden and become tartar.

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## 2.Can bleeding gums be a sign of something serious?

Occasional bleeding from the gums can be caused by brushing your teeth too hard or wearing dentures that don't fit well. Frequent bleeding from the gums can also indicate more serious conditions, such as periodontitis and leukemia.

## 3.Are bleeding gums an emergency?

Bleeding gums are typically a symptom of gum disease and may be handled with the aid of an emergency dentist. They will probably perform a deep dental cleaning or scaling and root planing procedure to help clear any infection within the gums.

## 4.Do bleeding gums mean infection?

Gums that are bleeding or swollen may be a symptom of type 1 or type 2 diabetes. When you have diabetes, your mouth is not as powerful at fighting germs, so you are more likely to get infections such as gum disease.

## 5.Should I keep brushing bleeding gums?

If your gums continue to bleed after brushing, you should see your dentist have your oral health checked. Gum pain, redness, or bleeding shouldn't happen every day



Image showing bleeding gums

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426, 16th cross, 5th main,  
HSR layout Sector 6,  
Bangalore - 560102 , Karnataka

9148434831  
dreamsmilez16@gmail.com  
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Image showing DreamSmilez Dental Clinic

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