

PERIODONTAL HEALTH AND A NEW TREATMENT MODALITY

We are committed to helping our patients maintain their periodontal or gum tissue health. This has and always will be one of our primary areas of focus for dental oral health.

Periodontal disease causes the loss of bone and soft tissues that surround our teeth. The source of the problem arises from what we call **BIOFILM** which is a thin membrane of bacteria surrounding the root surface. **It is a chronic inflammatory disease process** that involves the body's own immune system. In the era of Covid-19 many of us have heard of the "cytokine storm", an over-reactive inflammatory response. Periodontal disease has a similar biology.

Periodontal disease also **is linked to many systemic or body disorders** such as cardiovascular issues and diabetes, among others.

For so many biologic reasons we want everyone to maintain periodontal health and stability for a lifetime.

Currently, because of the coronavirus, we are going to **minimize aerosolizing** during the hygiene visit. Normally, the hygienist employs the ultrasonic scaler. This tool creates aerosol during the cleaning process. Since we want to minimize aerosolizing, we will instead use hand scaling instruments.

Additionally, in an effort to eliminate biofilm, we will be using a technology known as **Laser Bacterial Reduction (LBR)**. We already use this for some of our periodontal patients, but we can now use it for everyone. It is safe, effective, and painless. We are adding another laser to the office in order to offer this service at every cleaning visit. We do not want the fee for this procedure to be cost-prohibitive, so the extra charge will be nominal. LBR is not usually covered by insurance, and it is not required, but does add an additional measure of eliminating bacterial formations.

We are always seeking to improve the periodontal care we provide for our patients, so we will likely be discussing even more treatment options. There are a lot of exciting developments happening in this realm.

In the meantime, we hope everyone has been increasing their home **ORAL HYGIENE REGIMEN!** It could (or even should) include:

- Electric toothbrush
- Regular toothbrush for the bite surfaces
- Flossing
- Interdental brushes, such as the Soft Pick or Proxabrushes

- Tongue scraper
- Water Pick or Airflosser
- Oral rinse