

English Script – Gum disease and hygiene appointments

This script is the English version of a Sango video found online:

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Gum disease is caused by germs in your mouth. These germs form the sticky film on the teeth and gums known as 'plaque'. If this 'plaque' is left to sit on the gums it can cause the gums to become red, swollen, sore and can bleed. Brushing your teeth and gums properly at home twice a day can remove this sticky film. If your gums bleed when you brush this is a sign of germs being present and shows the area that needs to be brushed more NOT less.

Sometimes tooth brushing does not remove all the germs and the infection continues. It can cause the gums to shrink away from the teeth and destroy the bones around your teeth. At advanced stages of gum disease your teeth can become so loose that they can become painful and may even fall out.

Signs and symptoms of sick gums:

- red, swollen, tender gums
- gums that bleed easily
- gums that have pulled away from the teeth
- bad breath or bad taste
- teeth that are loose
- any change in the way your teeth fit together when you bite

At the dental clinic, a dentist will recommend a professional clean to remove the sticky film and any build-up of hard plaque called 'calculus'. Hard plaque cannot be removed by toothbrushing alone. The dentist will use a small machine with water and vibrations to break this down. The small machine moves very quickly around each tooth and down into the gum. This can be a little uncomfortable and, in some cases, may be too sensitive. If this is procedure becomes painful please let the dentist know.

For sensitive teeth or for big infections, this cleaning may be completed in sections and the area will need to be 'numbed' before the procedure to make sure it is not painful for you. This may take up to 4 appointments, cleaning one side at a time, top and bottom separately.

If you need to have your teeth and gums 'numbed' this will involve an injection. This injection may involve a 'sting' at first, before the area starts to feel a bit strange, tingly, tight and then fat. This strange feeling will go away in about 1-2 hours. It will not make you look different but will feel different. It is best to avoid hot foods and drinks while this area is numb, and do not touch or suck or bite on your lip or tongue while it is numb. Once it is 'numb' the procedure should not be painful, however you may still feel some pressure or discomfort.

Following the cleaning, the dentist may need to use some small instruments to scratch any remaining build-up of the surface of teeth. They will use an electric toothbrush to polish all your teeth. It is not uncommon for your gums to feel a little tender or sensitive for a day or two after this cleaning.

The dentist may also show you how to improve your brushing at home or show you how to use 'dental floss' to clean the area between your teeth. This is important because it is how well you clean your teeth every day at home that will do the best for preventing future gum disease.