

## Periodontal Laser Therapy

In the summer of 1998, the American Academy of Periodontology launched a broad-based campaign to educate the general public about new findings that supported what dental professionals had suspected for quite some time. Infections in the teeth and gums are not isolated to your mouth, but have a general effect on your overall health.

### **What are the symptoms of periodontal disease?**

The most common symptom is bleeding of the gums when brushing, flossing, or eating hard foods. Other symptoms of gum disease are sensitivity to hot and cold, gum recession, chronic bad breath, spaces developing between the teeth, swollen or tender gums, and a change in the color of your gums to a dark red. The only way to diagnose gum disease is by visiting your dentist or dental hygienist.

### **How can gum disease hurt my teeth?**

Periodontal disease is the #1 cause of tooth loss! Most people believe that tooth loss is caused by decay; and even though cavities can be serious they can usually be taken care of quickly and easily before they cause too much damage to teeth. However, when gum disease is left untreated it eventually begins to destroy the bone that holds the teeth in place. Once bone loss occurs, you are at risk for losing teeth.

### **What causes gum disease?**

Periodontal disease begins by a bacterial infection that lodges in the pockets created between the gum tissue and the tooth. The bacteria is housed in a microbial structure called "biofilm", which is a sticky, mucous-like substance that attaches to the tissue and begins the process of forming plaque and tartar on the tooth surface.

### **Do I just need to brush and floss better?**

Of course, good oral hygiene is a must but brushing and flossing alone won't reverse the damage done once the disease begins to progress. Unfortunately, periodontal disease doesn't get better without treatment.

### **What are some of the problems associated with gum disease?**

Periodontal disease is a bacterial infection that enters the blood stream and travels to major organs to create new infections. Research suggests that this may contribute to the development of heart disease, stroke, preterm births and low birth weight. It also poses a serious threat to those whose health is already compromised by diabetes, respiratory illnesses, and other systemic disease such as lupus, etc.

### **How do you treat periodontal disease?**

Traditionally, gum disease was treated with a procedure called “scaling and root planning alone. Performed by the dental hygienist, scaling and root planning involved using hand instruments to remove plaque and tartar. Unfortunately, since this technique didn’t remove the biofilm that houses the bacteria, the effectiveness of scaling and root planning has always been somewhat lacking. Since we are committed to clinical excellence at the office of Dr Hamid Nassery D.M.D., P.A., we treat periodontal disease with the most advanced technology available in modern dentistry, micro-ultrasonic instruments and lasers. This combined use of technologies actually eliminates the infection rather than “manage the disease”, which has been the traditional form of treatment.

### **How does the laser work?**

A diode laser is used in combination with a micro-ultrasonic hand instrument that detaches the biofilm from the tooth surface. The swirling motion created by the micro-ultrasonic creates a tornado-like effect which attacks the physical structure of biofilm.

Once the biofilm has been detached, the diode laser is used to sterilize the periodontal pockets and remove any infected tissue. As the old tissue is removed, microscopic clots form and the body’s natural healing response takes over; as this occurs, the tissue reattaches to the bone and the gums return to a healthy, infection-free state.

### **Can the laser hurt my teeth or cut my gums?**

Similar to how surgeons use lasers to remove diseased tissues, the magnetic light energy of the diode laser is specifically designed to seek out periodontal infection and therefore, doesn’t harm the teeth or other healthier tissue. This is one of the amazing characteristics of lasers!

Additionally, the dentist calibrates the laser to provide just the right amount of power to treat your gums without causing undue pain or trauma to the tissue.

If you request we will use the new form of needle-free anesthesia, Oraquix, to numb your gums. However, most of our guests don’t need anesthesia and actually report a warm, soothing sensation while receiving laser therapy.

After each treatment, the assistant will apply a soothing balm of vitamin E over your gums to cool the treated areas and encourage healing.

**Is periodontal laser therapy expensive?**

As in every case, we design treatment to prevent more extensive care and cost. Since the laser therapy depends upon how many sessions are required to completely remove the infection in your mouth. When the dentist designs your care, the number of sessions will be estimated. Fortunately, we have a number of payment options and our Patient Care Coordinator is an expert at making care affordable.

Why have I never heard of periodontal laser therapy before?

Because Dr Nassery, Davis, and Lauerence are so dedicated to keeping abreast of the most recent advancements in modern dentistry, we can offer treatments that many other dental practices haven't yet discovered. Currently, our office is one of the few practices in Florida with the training and credentials to offer this technology.