



What is gum disease?

Gum disease (also called periodontal disease) is a chronic bacterial infection that affects the gums and bone supporting your teeth. It can be prevented or easily treated if discovered early, but left untreated gum disease can lead to tissue, bone and tooth loss. Additionally, a number of studies suggest that gum disease may also be associated with more serious health problems such as diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

How can I prevent gum disease?

Beyond brushing your teeth with fluoride toothpaste and flossing, simply visiting the dentist is a basic measure you should take for preventive care and early diagnosis of any problems, like periodontal (gum) disease. By visiting the dentist regularly to receive the preventive care you need, you may be able to save the time, money and discomfort associated with gum disease treatment and other more extensive procedures.

However, a recent study of more than 96 million claims conducted by Delta Dental found that even insured people are not getting the proper amount of preventive dental care. The study found that although **nearly two million of Delta Dental's adult enrollees are at higher risk for gum disease, only half of them received the recommended two or more dental cleanings or periodontal maintenance treatments per year.**

Is gum disease prevention and treatment covered by my dental plan?

The good news is that Delta Dental's benefit plans are designed to prevent disease or find it early, when it is easier to treat. In fact, many of Delta Dental's benefit plans already cover important preventive treatments, like cleanings and exams, at 100 percent.

Schedule a dental visit and talk with your dentist about whether you are at risk for gum disease. To check your coverage to see what your dental plan covers, log in at deltadental.com to view your benefits and eligibility.