



Tobacco and Oral Health

Tobacco is linked to many general health risks, and it can also harm your oral health. Tobacco, whether in cigarette, cigar, pipe or smokeless form, can cause the following oral health conditions:

Periodontal (Gum) Disease

People who use tobacco have a higher risk of developing periodontal disease according to the American Academy of Periodontology. Smokers are seven times more likely to develop gum disease than non-smokers because smoking causes more plaque to adhere to teeth, exposing gums to harmful bacteria. Smoking is one of the most preventable risk factors for periodontal disease.

Cavities, Bad Breath & Discolored Teeth

Good oral health habits, such as brushing twice a day, flossing daily and visiting the dentist regularly, can prevent tooth decay. However, smokers are three times more prone to cavities due to an increase in tartar build-up as a result of tobacco use. Foul breath and stained teeth are two other negative side effects caused by smoking and can be avoided by quitting tobacco.



Tooth Loss

Studies have shown that more than 40 percent of smokers had lost their teeth by the end of their lives. Smoking constricts blood vessels, which affects the flow of blood to the gums and the rest of the mouth. Restricted blood flow prevents the mouth from receiving essential nutrients necessary for a healthy smile.

Oral Cancer

Nearly 50,000 Americans are diagnosed with oral cancer every year.¹ Only 64 percent of people diagnosed with oral cancer will live five years or more. Tobacco use is a major risk factor for developing oral cancer. People who consume both tobacco and alcohol in excess are at a higher risk for developing the disease.

Quitting tobacco, along with brushing twice per day and flossing daily, can have a large impact on your oral and overall health. Be sure to visit your dentist regularly and discuss any concerns you may have about your tobacco use and how it affects your oral health.

Information courtesy of the Academy of General Dentistry, American Dental Association and American Academy of Periodontology.

Visit **truassure.com** for more oral health resources and information.

¹American Cancer Society. *Cancer Facts & Figures 2017*.