



## Smoking *It's effects on the oral tissues*

Although most people are aware of the harmful effects of smoking in relation to heart disease and lung cancer, fewer people know about the detrimental effects of smoking on the health of their mouth. We have made it our practice policy to inform our patients of the harmful effects of smoking and to encourage our patients to quit.

Put simply ***tobacco use of any sort is harmful to the health of your mouth*** and we would recommend patients stop smoking to reduce the risk of harm to the oral tissues. If you smoke, you may be at increased risk of:

### ■ Mouth Cancer.

***Smoking is by far the most important risk factor for mouth cancer.***

- Smoking has been directly attributed to 95% of mouth and pharynx cancer cases.
- Alcohol acts together with tobacco to *considerably* increase the risk of oral cancer still further, something you should bear in mind if you enjoy a smoke whilst you drink alcohol.
- In Europe, oral cancer is now more common than cervical cancer

### ■ Gum Disease.

***Smokers are much more likely to suffer from gum problems than non-smokers.***

- Smoking may be responsible for more than half of all cases of gum disease in adults.
- Smokers are about 4 times more likely to suffer from advanced gum disease than non smokers – there are greater levels of bone loss around teeth in smokers, and so less attachment of the teeth to bone. ***This makes smoking a major cause of tooth loss.***
- Treatment of this advanced gum disease is much less effective if patients continue to smoke during therapy – smokers are twice as likely to lose teeth after treatment than non-smokers.
- The good news is that quitting seems to gradually erase the harmful effects of tobacco use on gum health.

### ■ Other Oral Problems:

- Bad Breath
- Staining of teeth, fillings, gums and dentures
- Loss of taste and smell
- Poor wound healing after gum treatment, surgery or extractions
- Increased plaque and tartar build-up

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