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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR OUR PATIENTS
REGARDING PERIODONTAL DISEASE**

Periodontal disease is a bacterial infection of the gums and bone caused by the bacteria found in dental plaque. If the plaque is allowed to remain to grow on the teeth, an inflammation of the gums called GINGIVITIS occurs. It is estimated to affect 4 out of every 5 people. As the disease progresses the pockets of bacteria deepen, destroying the bone that holds the teeth in the mouth. This results in tooth loss. Unlike most diseases that give us early warning signs, gum disease (periodontal disease) may progress silently, often without pain or overt symptoms that would alert you to its presence. It may develop slowly or progress very rapidly.

Of great concern to the dental community is the most recent research that demonstrates a link between periodontal disease and chronic infections, cardiovascular diseases and low birth weight babies. With this in mind, please be aware of the following signs and symptoms and check if you are aware of any of these symptoms in your mouth:

VISIBLE SIGNS

- * Gums that bleed when you brush your teeth.
- * Gums that are red, swollen, or tender.
- * Gums that have pulled away from your health.
- * Permanent teeth that are loose or separating.
- * Changes in the way your teeth fit together when biting.
- * Any changes in the fit of partial dentures.
- * Pus between your teeth and gums.
- * Chronic bad breath or bad taste.

INVISIBLE SIGNS

1. Abnormal spaces (periodontal pockets) developing between the teeth and gums.
2. Loss of the bone and connective tissue that normally surrounds and supports the teeth.

We are committed to your good health. If you or anyone you know is experiencing these symptoms, call our office immediately so that we may arrange an appointment for a periodontal screening examination.