

# Tooth Talk

**Q: My dentist told me I have gum disease, but I don't feel bad. What should I do?**

**A:** I'm sure your dentist recommended treatment for the following reasons:

Gum disease (periodontal disease) is an infection that affects the gums, ligaments and bone that supports the teeth. It is very possible to have infected gums without any apparent symptoms. Some warning signs are: red, swollen or tender gums; gums that bleed when brushing, flossing or eating; gums that have pulled away from your teeth in one or more areas; loose or separating teeth; pus around the tooth; a change in the way your teeth fit together when you bite.

Periodontal disease is an incurable bacterial infection that affects 76% of U.S. adults. It causes inflamma-

tion which may be painless, that can damage the attachment of the gums and bone to the teeth.

Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, and can range from more frequent cleaning visits all the way to gum surgery. Tooth loss is not the only potential problem posed by gum disease. There appears to be a link between gum disease and increased risk for diabetes, stroke, cardiovascular and Alzheimer's disease.

Good oral hygiene habits, a healthy diet and regular professional cleanings control periodontal disease.



**Dr. Charles Briscoe**



**Charles Briscoe, DDS**

7737 Herschel Ave. ♦ La Jolla, CA ♦ 858-454-3221

[ljdentalcare@san.rr.com](mailto:ljdentalcare@san.rr.com) • [www.lajolladental.com](http://www.lajolladental.com)