

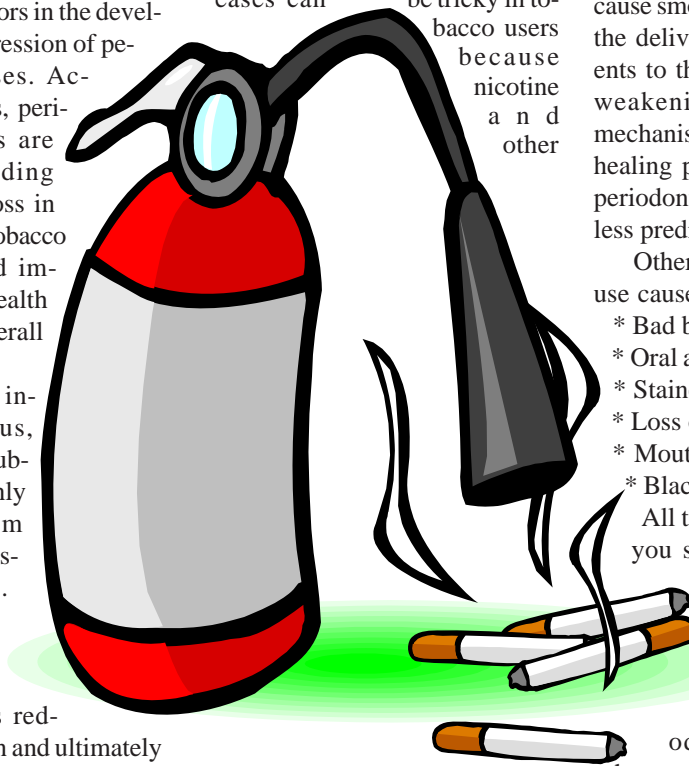


## TOBACCO AND ORAL HEALTH

### Break the Tobacco Habit and Save Your Oral Health

**T**obacco use negatively affects oral health because it is one of the factors in the development and progression of periodontal diseases. According to studies, periodontal diseases are one of the leading causes of tooth loss in adults. Aim for a tobacco free lifestyle and improve your oral health as well as your overall health!

Tobacco use increases calculus, which is a hard substance that can only be removed from teeth during professional cleanings. Bacteria from calculus release toxins that infect the gums and causes redness, inflammation and ultimately destruction. The destruction creates pockets causing the gums and bone to shrink and pull away from the teeth. If left untreated, the teeth



may become loose and be lost. Detection of periodontal diseases can be tricky in tobacco users because nicotine and other

chemicals in tobacco mask symptoms commonly associated with periodontal diseases. In addition, the treatment of periodontal disease in tobacco users can be difficult, but not impossible. That's because smoking and tobacco reduces the delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the gum and bone tissues, weakening the body's defense mechanisms. This slows down the healing process, which can cause periodontal treatment results to be less predictable.

Other oral conditions tobacco use causes include:

- \* Bad breath;
- \* Oral and lip cancer;
- \* Stained teeth;
- \* Loss of taste and smell;
- \* Mouth sores and spots; and,
- \* Black hairy tongue.

All tobacco use is harmful! If you smoke cigarettes, cigars, pipes (including hookah pipe) or chew smokeless tobacco, you are at risk for severe periodontal diseases and/or other oral health conditions.

The good news is that quitting smoking today can improve the healing process and treatment outcomes. ☺

## Tips to Help You Quit Tobacco Use

For more information visit [www.perio.org](http://www.perio.org)

Periodontal treatment can be more difficult in tobacco users, so your periodontist will urge you to quit tobacco use. The good news is that quitting may gradually erase the harmful effects of tobacco use on periodontal health.

Starting a smoking cessation program is a huge commitment and support might ease the process. To begin, ask your periodontist or physician, or contact your local hospital for more information on programs that best fit your needs.

Other tips recommended to help the tobacco-cessation program

include:

- Picking a stress-free time to quit.
- Asking for support and encouragement from family, friends, and colleagues.
- Starting some form of exercise or activity each day to relieve stress and improve your health.
- Getting plenty of rest and eating a well-balanced diet.
- Joining a stop-smoking program, or other support group.
- Brushing your teeth often.
- Changing your daily routine and spending more time in places where smoking is prohibited.
- Keeping oral substitutes handy such as carrots, apples, and sugarless gum. ☺