

## Protect periodontal diseases with daily oral care!

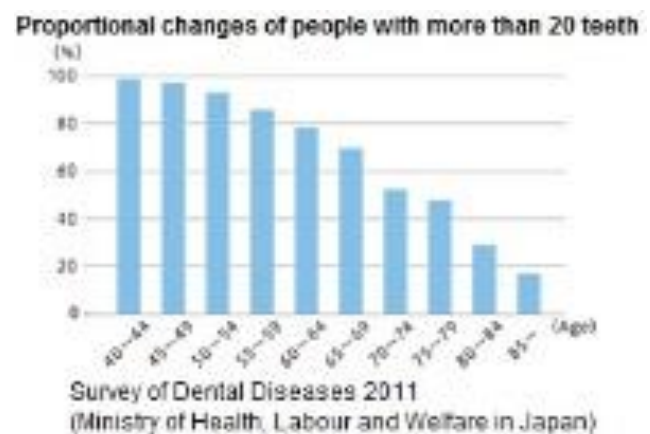
**T**he symptoms of periodontal disease progress gradually and teeth may eventually come off. We will introduce some checking points to review daily oral care in order to keep healthy teeth.

### ◆◆ What is periodontal disease?

There are 200 billion of bacteria present in the mouth of healthy people. These bacteria grow from the debris left on teeth by eating food and become dental plaque. The acid that is produced by the bacteria in dental plaque melt teeth, so it can be a cause of tooth decay. When dental plaque firms up, it becomes a calculus which may inflame the gingiva (gums) and cause periodontal disease.

Periodontal disease is considered as one of the lifestyle-related diseases because it is caused by daily lifestyle habits. Periodontal disease does not produce pain, so the symptoms have already been progressed when we notice it. The symptoms of periodontal disease are developing redness, swelling and bleeding from gums, and bad breath. If it progresses further, the bones that are the foundation to support teeth will melt and the teeth may come off.

Today, 80% of Japanese people who are over the age of 30 develop periodontal disease, which is the biggest cause of losing teeth. There are many people who are not aware of having periodontal disease or do not seek treatment even though they are aware of it. This behavior links to a high incidence of periodontal disease in Japan. Losing teeth causes oral dysfunction and affects adversely general health as well as dental



health. According to a governmental investigation, people up to 69 years old are able to keep an average of 20 or more teeth. It found out that people loses an average of 10 or more teeth between the ages of 65 to 70 years old. Maintaining healthy teeth is the foundation to have a more satisfying daily life where you can experience the joy of eating what you want or have a conversation with others. People who have 20 or more teeth are mostly

satisfied with their own dietary life. The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare in Japan has advocated and promoted the 8020 movement which encourages people to keep more than 20 teeth at the age of 80 in the hope that people can enjoy the pleasure of eating foods with their own teeth throughout their lifetime. The importance of oral care has been gaining national recognition in Japan.

### ◆◆ Points for dental health

Periodontal disease can be prevented by removing dental plaque and the calculus that are the cause of the disease. What you should practice with your daily brushing is "proper brushing". It is important to carefully brush one tooth at a time instead of brushing in a vague way.

#### 【How to choose a toothbrush】

There are three degrees of hardness for a toothbrush: hard, normal and soft. It should be chosen according to the oral condition. Hard and normal types are suitable to clean dental plaque properly but they may hurt gingiva, so careful attention is needed about how to brush teeth and how much force to apply. If the gingiva hurts or is swollen or bleeding, using a soft toothbrush is recommended. Once the condition of gingiva improves, you can change the toothbrush to a normal hardness. We recommend to use a toothbrush with end-diminishing bristles that can easily remove dirt between teeth. A toothbrush with a compact size head is preferable since it can easily reach to the back of the teeth. Regarding the handle of a toothbrush, a straight handle is recommended because it facilitates the movement of the toothbrush in the mouth.



#### 【How to brush your teeth】

You should apply the toothbrush to the teeth at an angle of 45 degrees and place bristles in the crevice between the teeth and gums. Then, you brush your teeth one by one while vibrating the toothbrush sideways within a width of about 1 mm. If you brush strongly, you may damage the surface of teeth and gingiva. .



### ◆◆ Points for dental health

There are foods called "cleansing foods" that clean the inside of the mouth and teeth. They include foods rich in dietary fiber such as carrots, burdock roots, lettuce, celery, etc., and sour foods such as Umeboshi (pickled Japanese apricot) or vinegary foods. Food containing a lot of dietary fiber cleans the teeth by removing the dirt attached to them during mastication. Sour foods promote the secretion of saliva to shed the eating residue in the mouth and suppress bacterial growth. They also restore the pH level in the mouth from acidic, which easily

cause tooth decay, to neutral. Traditional Japanese food uses a lot of these cleansing foods, so it is good for the prevention of periodontal disease.

Regular dental examinations are important because remaining eating residue or plaque is accumulates even if you take care of your oral health every day. We recommend you to review how to brush your teeth and eating habits in order to enjoy eating foods for a long time.

### ◆◆ Good Foods for Oral Care

#### **Cleaning the surface of teeth during mastication**

##### **Foods containing a lot of dietary fiber**

Carrots, Lettuce, Burdock Roots, Celery, etc.



#### **Promote the secretion of saliva**

##### **Sour foods**

Umeboshi (pickled Japanese apricot) or Vinegared foods, etc.

