

PATIENT FACT SHEET: HOW SMOKING IMPACTS YOUR MOUTH



Common questions dentist are often asked about how smoking impacts teeth and harms your mouth:



How will smoking affect my Gums?

If you smoke, you are about three times more likely to have gum disease than a non-smoker. Smoking reduces blood flow to the gums, which both causes and hides the signs of gum disease. In fact, many smokers are not aware of how much gum disease they have.

Can smoking increase Tooth decay in my mouth?

Smokers can also have more tooth decay than non-smokers.

Why has smoking caused my teeth to become loose?

Gum disease is both the inflammation of gums, and the loss of bone and tissue which surround and support your teeth. With no support, teeth loosen, become wobbly and cause pain, and may have to be extracted. Gum disease the major cause of adults. Smokers are more likely to lose their teeth than non-smokers.

Why does smoking cause my mouth to be dry and why does it matter?

The nicotine in tobacco reduces saliva flow and some smokers can get dry mouth symptoms. Having a dry mouth increases the chance of getting decay. Dry mouths often cause bad breath also.

Someone told me my teeth are stained and I have bad breath?

The most noticeable immediate effects of smoking are stained teeth and tongue, gum discolouration. Smoking also can result in bad breath and a loss of taste and smell.

Is it true that smoking can increase risk of oral cancer?

Smoking can also cause or worsen gum disease (also called periodontal disease) and increase your risk of mouth and lip cancer. Tobacco use is a major cause of oral cancer. Around 59% of mouth (oral) cancers in Australia are caused by smoking.