

# An Annual Snapshot of Your Oral Health: The Comprehensive Periodontal Evaluation



From the American Academy of Periodontology



A regular visit to your periodontist should be part of your overall health and wellness plan. And while a bi-annual dental checkup and cleaning are necessary, these visits may not include a detailed look at the health of your gums. The American Academy of Periodontology recommends that all adults undergo a comprehensive periodontal evaluation (CPE) once a year.

**What is a Comprehensive Periodontal Evaluation?** A CPE assesses your risk of periodontal disease and determines the right types of treatment if periodontal disease is diagnosed.

**Teeth:** Your dental professional will evaluate each tooth as well as dental fillings, implants, crowns, or other types of restoration. The position of the teeth and their closeness to each other will be noted.

**Bite:** The evaluation will include a check of the way your teeth come together when your mouth is closed, also known as occlusion or bite. Your dental professional will look for moving or loose teeth, which can be a sign of periodontal disease.

**Plaque and Tartar Buildup:** The amount and location of bacterial plaque and tartar will be assessed.

**Gums:** A dental probe will be inserted into the spaces between your teeth and gums to see how well your

gums attach to your teeth. Any inflammation or bleeding that occurs during the probing process is documented.

**Bone Structure:** X-rays may be taken to evaluate the quality of the bone in your upper and lower jaw and to determine if any bone loss has occurred.

**Risk Factors:** Your dental professional will ask about a number of periodontal disease risk factors, including age, tobacco use, family history of periodontal disease, or if you have another systemic condition that may be linked to periodontal disease, such as heart disease or diabetes.

## Why Do I Need a Comprehensive Periodontal Evaluation?

With periodontal disease affecting nearly 64.7 million people in the United States (almost one in every two adults over the age of 30), the health of your gums should be monitored consistently to minimize your risk. Many patients don't see a dental professional until after they've noticed pain, bleeding gums, or loosening teeth— all signs that periodontal disease is in its advanced stages. An annual CPE can detect periodontal disease before it becomes severe, and is the first step to creating a suitable treatment and/or maintenance plan for your individual situation.