

Your Annual Comprehensive Periodontal Evaluation (CPE)

You already know that visiting your dental professional regularly for a check-up and cleaning is an essential part of keeping your oral health at its best. However, these visits may not specifically look for signs of periodontal disease.

The American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) recommends that you receive a comprehensive periodontal evaluation, or CPE, annually to determine if you have or if you are at risk for periodontal disease. By assessing your periodontal health yearly, you and your dental professional will know how healthy your teeth and gums are, and will be better able to assess if you need additional treatment. Your CPE can be performed at your regular yearly check-up by a member of the dental team, including a general dentist, registered dental hygienist, or periodontist.

Your dental professional will assess these six areas during your CPE:

- 1. Your Teeth:** Your dental professional will examine your teeth and any restorations you might have, including dental fillings, dental implants, crowns, and dentures. During the examination of your teeth, he or she will note the position of the teeth and their closeness to one another.
- 2. Your Plaque:** The amount and location of any plaque and/or tartar will be assessed
- 3. Your Gums:** An instrument called a dental probe will be inserted into the space between your tooth and gums to measure the depth of your gum pockets and to see how well your gums attach to your teeth. Any bleeding that occurs during the

probing process, as well as any inflammation of your gums, will also be recorded.

- 4. Your Bite:** Your dental professional will then observe your bite, also known as occlusion. While you bite down, your dental professional will look to see how your teeth fit together and for any signs of tooth movement or loose teeth. This is important because moving or loose teeth can be a sign of periodontal disease.
- 5. Your Bone Structure:** Your dental professional will examine the bone in and around your mouth since it can be affected by periodontal disease. X-rays may be taken to help evaluate the quality of bone in your upper and lower jaw areas and to determine if any bone loss has occurred.
- 6. Your Risk Factors:** You will be asked about a variety of risk factors for periodontal disease, including age, tobacco use, if anyone else in your family has periodontal disease, or if you have another systemic condition that may be linked to periodontal disease, such as diabetes or cardiovascular disease.

When your dental professional has finished your comprehensive periodontal evaluation, he or she will discuss the findings with you and explain if any treatment is needed. This is a good time to ask any questions you may have about the evaluation, findings, or anything else regarding your oral health.

In addition to brushing twice each day, flossing at least once each day, and seeing your dental professional for regular cleanings, receiving your annual CPE is an essential part of your oral health routine.



Learn More

For more information about your annual comprehensive periodontal evaluation, be sure to explore the following resources:

- **Visit the AAP's website** for general information about your CPE
- **Watch an educational video** for a visual explanation of the evaluation
- **Download the AAP's CPE checklist** to print and take to your next dental appointment

These resources and more can be found at www.perio.org.

The American Academy of Periodontology Patient Page is a public service of the AAP and should not be used as a substitute for the care and advice of your personal periodontist. There may be variations in treatment that your periodontist will recommend based on individual facts and circumstances. Visit perio.org to assess your risk and for more information on periodontal disease.