

## EP. 65 Link Between Smoking and Periodontal Disease

Unless you've been living under a rock for the last 50 years, you probably already know there is a link between these two. In this episode, we dive a little deeper.

Smoking is one of the most significant risk factors in the development and progression of periodontal disease.

### **It's our obligation as healthcare providers to talk to our patients about the risks of smoking!**

People know it's not safe to smoke, but it is still our responsibility as healthcare providers to educate them of the connections. When a patient is not ready to quit smoking, it can be hard to motivate them. Nonetheless, with oral cancer statistics on the rise, strong connections between periodontal disease and smoking, and respiratory disease, we need to get back on the bandwagon.

### **Common gingival disturbances associated with smoking:**

- More attachment loss
- More alveolar bone loss
- Deep probe readings
- More teeth with furcation involvement

### **What to say to a patient who smokes and interested in stopping?**

Check your state for smoking cessation programs and have brochures in the office to give to your patients. You can also refer them to [askadviserefer.org](http://askadviserefer.org).

Dental professionals have an important role in screening patients for oral cancer and encouraging patients to stop smoking. Don't assume because they've always smoked they'll never quit. Educate them and give them the statistics. Show them the progression of their periodontal disease and provide them tools if they want to quit.

Do you have smoking cessation tools in your office? If not, be sure to call your state and look for some great resources to share with your patients.