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## **GUM DISEASE: PROCEDURES FOR PREVENTING RE-INFECTION**

Gum infections are contagious. While you are eliminating your gum problem and healing, it is very important for you to avoid getting re-infected.

Parasites and bacteria are transmitted from mouth to mouth by anything that enters your mouth or touches your lips (i.e. dishes, utensils, toothbrushes, shared bathroom cups, lip sticks/balms, kissing, shared food/drinks, etc...)

To avoid re-infection, it is highly recommended you do the following:

- Throw out your present toothbrush and NEVER share anyone else's.
- Replace it with a new one once you complete your treatment.
- Replace it again once your slide is clear.
- Sterilize electric toothbrush head.

Wash all dishes in the dishwasher and dry at high heat. If no dishwasher, use the following procedure:

- Fill sink with the hottest water your tap produces, immerse dishes completely in water.
- Add a full kettle of boiling water to sink
- Add 1 cup of bleach
- Let stand till cool
- Wash with dish soap and water and air dry

### **Everyday Avoidances**

- Keep hands clean and away from your mouth between washing (i.e. nail biting).
- Seal envelopes with a wet sponge, not with mouth.
- Wipe down telephone receiver regularly with disinfectant.
- Avoid sharing and tasting foods, cigarettes, and utensils.
- Wash your dishtowels in the hottest water possible and dry on hot cycle.
- Avoid public water fountains.
- Discard cosmetics such as lip stick and balm.
- Use disposable mouth rinse cups.
- Use filtered or bottled water when possible.
- Avoid salad bars and buffets.
- Keep teeth and tongue clean and conditioned to minimize inflammation allow bacteria re-entry.
- Avoid injury to gums such as burns or floss cuts.

**IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER:** 1.) Eliminate amalgam fillings since they attract parasitic activity and 2.) bring significant others to the dentist for a microscope analysis to ensure they are free of gum disease as to not re-infection one another.