Praise for

_Reversing Gum Disease Naturally_

“Reversing Gum Disease Naturally emphasizes the blending of the classical and holistic approaches to oral hygienic health care. Sandra Senzon, R.D.H., emphasizes the gentle, natural nurturing of the gingival tissues in order to resist bacterial invasion, and thus maintain your proper gingival health. She also stresses the concept of teeth lasting for a lifetime through enlightened prevention, including proper home care and oral hygiene. This book allows the patient to be an active participant along with healthcare professionals.”

—Jay P. Goldsmith, D.M.D.

“Reversing Gum Disease Naturally presents techniques and information so that you can reverse already unhealthy states in your mouth or prevent the onset of gum disease. Sandra Senzon enhances patients’ oral health through traditional as well as holistic methods.”

—Barry Musikant, D.M.D.

“After reading Sandra Senzon’s book, there is a ray of hope at the end of the tunnel for all those who suffer from gum disease. We ultimately don’t have to lose our natural teeth. Sandra Senzon shows us the many ways in which the mouth is connected to the body, and how, with the use of natural herbal products and proper mechanic techniques, you can reverse gum disease naturally.”

—Joseph P. Greer, D.O.S.
REVERSING
GUM DISEASE
NATURALLY
REVERSING GUM DISEASE NATURALLY

A Holistic Home Care Program

Sandra Senzon, R.D.H.
To my patients, who have kept me going in trying times, and to the dentists, who have grown to love my style.
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If you feel that you lack control in the dental office, the problem might be a lack of information. *Reversing Gum Disease Naturally* is an in-depth discussion of the oral cavity and its relationship to the rest of the body, and it is written on a level that both the dental professional and the layperson can understand. In simple terms, Sandra Senzon, R.D.H., increases your dental IQ, which can give you greater control when you work with dental professionals.

I first became acquainted with Sandra, a registered dental hygienist, when she began treating patients in my office on Madison Avenue in New York City. Sandra has been active in clinical treatment since 1977. She has an extensive following of loyal patients who have continued to improve periodontally as a result of her techniques, which are well described in this book. They include natural, nonsurgical periodontal treatments and state-of-the-art cleaning with herbs, coupled with education about hygiene at home and quality dentistry.

The material in this book is up-to-date, practical, and well presented. It encompasses the full scope of conditions
of the body and their relationship to the oral cavity. As Sandra puts it, “The mouth is a mirror of the body’s health.” Sandra has worked tirelessly to put the mouth and body into a natural balance, and she draws on over twenty-five years of experience in treating patients’ gums and in presenting a practical and natural approach to her work. This informative book is for all those who are concerned about the health of their mouth.

— Mitchell Charnas, D.M.D.
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I give special thanks to my publisher, who saw merit in this book, and to my agent, Jeff Herman, who believed in me. My children, Eric and Bari, have always been there with a special kind of support. Thanks also to the artist, Aaron. All of you are wonderful.

I also thank myself for having the courage to write about this topic in a humanistic manner!
Introduction

Have you been told that you have periodontal disease? Do you dread losing your teeth? My book will guide you to the truth about gum disease. Reversing Gum Disease Naturally is packed with information you need to help you keep your natural teeth. Treatment of gum disease does not have to be the painful experience that unfortunately has been for some of my patients who have been treated by hygienists practicing other techniques. Reading this book will acquaint you with oral hygiene and help you learn what you can do to keep healthy gums and teeth.

Gum tissue is a covering around the roots of our teeth that is in great need of massage and cleansing. We abuse our mouths regularly by grinding and clenching our teeth, and by eating foods with sugar and spices. Many of us also eat sticky, adhesive-type foods. At my hygiene center, I work
with natural herbs that feed the gum tissue in healthy ways. Ninety percent of the cure for gum disease entails not only patient education but motivation in terms of dental hygiene home care. Proper instruction will allow and foster corrective home care maintenance.

Articles and advertisements on plaque and tartar talk about bacteria invading the structures of the mouth. But what about the fragile tissue that holds these bacteria? If we condition gum tissue on a regular basis, we would not have a holding pocket for food and bacteria to sit next to the tooth and bone! Bacteria will always be present in the body and mouth, but we can learn to nurture our mouth and gently bring it to a healthy state.

When I began my career twenty-six years ago, I saw that people had tremendous problems with the loss of adult teeth. Even though I was instructed to teach patients to brush and floss, I saw that brushing and flossing were not enough. I noticed that the patients’ gum tissue seemed stretched and loose around crowns and bridges, areas where there is much irritation to the surrounding tissue due to crown margins and materials used for crowns and bridges. As I continued to evaluate the condition of these patients, I saw the need for greater tissue-hygiene control.

As a dedicated practitioner, I researched and evaluated products from all over the world that can help heal these conditions, and I brought them back home to offer to my own patients. I developed and marketed a “home care kit” containing a toothbrush, baking soda toothpaste, rubber tip, mirror, and instructional brochure. This kit has been promoted at the International Gift Show and at dental trade shows. As a result of this, I have been interviewed by many
trade magazines. I continue to get a great deal of publicity for my efforts, and this has led me to travel all over the world seeking the best products that are available.

I now have a Tooth Spa on Madison Avenue in New York City, where my colleagues and I work on gums as well as clean and whiten teeth. I had a book published, *The Hygiene Professional: A Partner in Dentistry*, to help train other dental hygienists to work in the same fashion. After the evolution of the Tooth Spa came the creation of a character aptly named the Tooth Fairy. Using this character, I initiated the first dental hygiene educational show on cable television, called *The Tooth Fairy Show*. I have written a series of five children’s books, *Tooth Fairy City*, to help motivate and educate children, and have even lectured in hospitals and schools dressed as the Tooth Fairy!

After reading my book, you will have an excellent chance of keeping your teeth and gums healthy, and you will not be misled by the “business” of dentistry. The information contained in this book will help you work better with your dental professional, and also to control the maintenance of your mouth by yourself. Your teeth and gums will let you know how they are feeling, and as you become acquainted with various problems, you will be able to work on them as they arise. Whatever you do, do not wait until the problems become so severe that they are more difficult to reverse.
Part I will describe gum disease and its onset. In these chapters, you will get a new and broader understanding of your mouth and how it is a mirror of your body. Stress, fear, and pain are major causes of gum disease, and in Part I, healing modalities will be discussed on how to reduce stress, pain, and fear.

Read on, and you will be delighted to see that the mouth is connected to the total body. You will begin to reverse gum disease naturally!
Gum Disease

*Its Signs, and the First Steps Toward Healing*

Understanding Gum Disease

With increased awareness of periodontal disease and a greater selection of dental hygiene products available, why is gum disease the most commonly diagnosed health problem among today’s American adult population, affecting approximately 40 million people? Since this disease of the mouth has a destructive nature, it is important that you follow the guidelines described in this book to help begin the healing process. People have been losing their teeth as part of the aging process; however, with routine cleanings and good home care, we can all keep our natural teeth. If you exercise preventive care, it is not unreasonable to expect your teeth and gums to last a lifetime.

To understand gum disease in simple terms, think of your teeth rooted in bone the way a plant is rooted in soil. If the soil supporting the plant begins to erode, the plant will
Tooth rooted in bone.

Plant rooted in soil.
loosen and bend. The same thing can happen with your teeth. If the bone that supports the teeth in their sockets begins to erode, the teeth will loosen and fall out.

The first stage of periodontal disease is called *gingivitis*: *gingiv* (gum tissue) and *itis* (inflammation). This initial stage is characterized by loose, swollen, tender, and/or bleeding gums. The loose, flabby gum tissue allows pockets to form between the teeth and the gum tissue—pockets in which food debris can collect and harmful bacteria can multiply. The bacteria may then attack the neighboring jawbone, causing it to erode. When bone loss has occurred, the disease has progressed to the second stage. This is known as *periodontitis*, and is classified as early, moderate, or advanced, depending on the degree of bone destruction.

What causes gingivitis? Gingivitis is a bacterial infection of the gum tissue. Bacteria live in plaque, a sticky film that accumulates on your teeth every day. Plaque needs to be removed by proper oral home care. If it is not removed properly, the toxins in the plaque will cause the gums to get irritated and infected. Plaque left on the teeth and not disrupted by brushing and flossing will calcify and turn into *calculus* (commonly called “tartar”). Brushing and flossing cannot remove calculus; it must be removed by a professional. Calculus found caked on the roots of diseased teeth, in addition to containing bacterial toxins, is a mechanical irritant to the soft tissue.

**Signs of Disease**

There are many signs that indicate the presence of gum disease. They can include:
Halitosis, or bad breath. An end product of this disease process and tissue breakdown is very often mouth malodor, or halitosis, commonly called “bad breath.” Although halitosis is a common symptom of periodontal disease, it may be caused by other health problems or conditions as well, such as gastritis (acid stomach). If your breath is sour in the morning, it might be due to dehydration or loss of saliva during sleep. And certain allergies can leave a bacterial mucous that mixes with your saliva and causes bad breath. Many medications also have side effects that can leave you with bad breath. Therefore, you should seek out a professional for a diagnosis of what is causing the halitosis.

However, to determine if you have halitosis, cup your hands over your mouth and breathe out. Then smell. If you detect an odor, then you probably have bad breath. Or ask your spouse or a close friend to inform you if you have this problem. To determine if the halitosis is originating from your mouth, try smelling your dental floss after you have used it. If the floss has a foul odor, the halitosis is probably emanating from your teeth and gums.

Malpositioned teeth. Another warning sign of periodontal disease is loose and malpositioned teeth. Teeth will move out of place due to bone loss. If your teeth are moving out of position and seem to overlap, or if gaps are forming between your teeth, this may be a warning sign that you have gum disease. There are other reasons for loose teeth, such as a fractured root, so do seek a professional to obtain a proper diagnosis. Do not try to diagnose the condition yourself!
Gum Disease

Receding gums.

- **Receding gums.** Have you ever heard the expression, “long in the tooth”? This is used to describe receding gums, or gums that are “backing away” from the teeth. The condition is the result of gum and bone loss and subsequent root exposure, thus giving the tooth a longer appearance. Sensitivity can occur as well, because the root does not have an enamel covering. Enamel covers the crowns of your teeth and acts as a protective covering.

- **Bleeding gums.** Do your gums bleed when you brush your teeth? Bleeding around your gums is an important indication of periodontal disease and is often the first sign you may notice. Bleeding, as well as inflammation and irritation of the gums, may also signal other medical problems, so do not ignore these signs. Seek a professional opinion. Such bleeding also can be a result of