

* Observing common clinical signs of cocaine use.
* Signs include: bruxism, gingival lesions, worn enamel, and patient personality.
* Educating the patient on proper oral hygiene instructions to prevent any further complications.
* Speaking in a reassuring, comforting manner to motivate the patient to seek rehabilitation.

## **Role of the Dental Hygienist**

**References:**

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### Cocaine can cause ample amounts of oral health complications due to the various ways users ingest the drug.

### When sniffed through the nose, cocaine can damage the tissue between the nostrils. This can ultimately effect how you breathe and speak.

### When combined with saliva, cocaine creates a highly acidic solution in the oral cavity, which can wear away tooth enamel and lead to future decay.

### When rubbed on the gingiva, ulcers and lesions can form in the oral cavity and damage the underlying bone.

## **Cocaine**

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**Effects of Cocaine on the Oral Cavity**

# **Side Effects of Smoking Cocaine**

**Dissolved in saliva, cocaine powder results in a substantial decrease in the salivary pH. As a result, the risk of dissolving the tooth mineral calcium hydroxyapatite is increased. In some chronic users, the combination of saliva and cocaine can wear away tooth enamel, eventually leading to decay. Tooth loss is also a common occurrence. It can take less than three months of use to reach the point where teeth are so severely damaged, that they fall out or need to be removed.**



The main method of ingesting cocaine is through the nasal cavity. More than 50% of the people who snort cocaine can suffer from chronic nosebleeds, intranasal crusting, rhinitis, and chronic sinusitis. Not only does snorting cocaine affect the nasal cavity, but can also lead to perforation of the palate.

As result of the oral use of cocaine, numerous individuals developed gingival lesions at the site of application. The gingivae were coated with a white slough, which could easily be removed, showing underlying ulceration and erythema. In addition, gingival lacerations have been seen due to aggressive brushing during a “high” period.

# **Side Effects of Cocaine on the Gingiva**

# **Side Effects of Snorting Cocaine**

 - Donec vehicula mauris in est

“Duis at neque eu ligula vehicula feugiat.”