

The Guardians of the Gums

The Kingdom of Mouth had known prosperous times; there was peace throughout the land, and the villagers were happy to live in such a healthy state. The kingdom was divided into three villages: *Teeth* to the north and south, *Tongue* in the middle, and *Gums*, nearest the border to their neighbor, the warrior horde of *Plaque*. *Teeth* was the shiniest village of all and flourished. It was where the King spent most of this time, and he worked hard to ensure that *Teeth* remained the brightest village. The King spent the rest of his time on *Tongue*; it was his next favorite territory, and he would focus on cleaning up the midlands when he was not busy with *Teeth*. Neglected were the subjects from *Gums*, for their village was neither favored nor prominent to the King and his subjects.

Each village was protected by a knight and his fellow squires. Sir Gartner and his squires ruled over the village of *Gums*, and although the village was often neglected, Gartner and his squires were loyal to the realm. They knew even better than the King that the Kingdom would be weaker without the support of every citizen working together. Sir Gartner and his squires would plead with the King to pay more attention to *Gums*, but he would frequently ignore their requests because of his short-sighted focus on the villages he held in favor and visited more often.

One day the warriors of *Plaque* joined with the armies of the *Tartar* republic to invade the Kingdom of Mouth, but the King was unafraid. He sent forth his defenders from the village of *Teeth* to defeat the encroaching soldiers. The *Plaque* and *Tartar* were strong, and they fought hard against the defenders of *Teeth*. After weeks of fighting, the loyal *Teeth* were still determined but losing the battle. The king took notice of *Teeth*'s waning effort and called on the village of *Tongue* to help the villagers from *Teeth*. The warring *Plaque* fought even harder than before, and after more weeks of opposition, they began to gain control of both villages. Sir Gartner and his squires looked on and knew something must be done. "We will persevere and prevail!" Gartner asserted. "We will not stand still while our kingdom is destroyed by the *Plaque*!" Sir Gartner and his squires fearlessly rode out to help the villagers from *Teeth* and *Tongue*. When they reached the battlefield, the other knights were exhausted from the fight, but Sir Gartner and his squires fought hard day and night to help the villages eliminate *Plaque* from the Kingdom and working together, the King and his subjects were saved by Sir Gartner and the guardians of the *Gums*. The day after the epic battle, the King invited the entire kingdom to his castle for a celebratory feast. The King made a royal announcement in salute of Sir Gartner and his squires, and he thanked them for saving the Kingdom from the *Plaque*. "From now on", the king proclaimed, "all villages will be treated equally! I have realized from these battles that each village is vital to our Kingdom, and for us to know peace, we must not merely focus on one village but on our entire Mouth because then the *Plaque* will never defeat us. We shall, and we must, be the guardians of all the good people of *Gums*." And so it was that peace was restored throughout the land, and the evil *Plaque* and *Tartar* were vanquished, never to be seen again.

GUARDIANS OF THE GUMS

What are guardians of the gums? It makes sense that just taking care of your teeth is not enough. After all, gums are the foundation for holding your teeth in place so you want to make sure your foundation, your gums, are healthy.

My personal experience taught me first-hand the importance of using all the tools that guard and protect my teeth and my gums! I brushed my teeth ever since I was little, but I seldom flossed. When I was three years old, I had fallen hard on my front baby teeth. As my adult teeth came in they were very small. They weren't any larger than my baby teeth. They were also bucked out, spaced, and uneven. After meeting with three orthodontists, I told my mom I wanted to go with D. Gartner. He was the only one that talked directly to me too when explaining what need to be done.

My treatment was coming along fine. My teeth were straightening and coming together. Dr. Gartner and his staff reminded me at every visit that I needed to be better with flossing especially now with my braces. When I first got my braces put on there was a clear gap between the top of my gums and my braces. I was good about brushing my teeth, but my lack of flossing and caring for my gums became a big problem. My gums, over time, had become inflamed and were slowly coming down covering my teeth. My gums were at the top of my brace line. Dr. Gartner explained I needed gum surgery. Dr. Gartner sent me to a wonderful doctor who performed the surgery. It wasn't fun but after the surgery and healing, I found out that I had wonderful, beautiful, full sized adult teeth! Through the years of not taking care of my gums, they had slowly started covering my teeth, even before my braces!

Healthy gums are important to keeping your teeth. Healthy gums are also important to your overall health. Poor gum health can cause a lot of serious problems not just for your teeth, but for you too. Did you know that gum disease such as periodontal can cause other health problems such as Alzheimer's? Gum disease can also affect your lungs, kidneys, and your heart. Poor life choices such as smother and chewing tobacco can have terrible effects on your gums and mouth. Guardians of the gums include: regular proper brushing, flossing on a regular basis, antibacterial rinses, regular dental check-ups and cleanings, healthy eating, and drinking water!

Thanks to Dr. Gartner and his staff, they taught me what the "Guardians of the Gums" are and why they are so important. I now regularly use all the tools of the Guardians of the gums. Guardians of the gums have not only kept my straight smile beautiful, but have kept me healthy too!

