You are considering orthodontic treatment. Why do we ask you about smoking?

There are a couple of reasons:

- Smoking will increase your risk of gum disease, and orthodontics adds to that stress. It is discouraging to go through a period of orthodontic treatment to improve your bite and find that the gum and bone around the teeth has been damaged.
- It works to talk to people about smoking. Kaiser patients are asked at every single visit whether they have been smoking. The percent of people in California who smoke is 12%, but in Kaiser patients it is 9%.

Some other things to think about:

Twelfth graders this year smoke more marijuana than they do cigarettes. We assume marijuana is just as damaging as tobacco. Other forms of tobacco people use include all kinds of smokeless tobacco, such as snuff or chewing tobacco, hookahs, cigars, or Bidi. All cause damage to the gums and bone around the teeth.

80% of mouth cancer victims are smokers.

Stop smoking by age 20 and your risk drops back to normal in five years.

A very good resource is TIPS from former smokers at: http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/. You will see videos of people who have been there.

Another is a site for teens that provides videos, apps and text messaging to help quit. http://teen.smokefree.gov/

Final Thoughts

If you smoke routinely, maybe orthodontic treatment should be put on hold. Let us discuss the risks you might be facing.