Noma is an acute gangrenous infection mainly affecting the mouth and face. It has the potential to cause massive tissue destruction. In the absence of adequate treatment in the acute phase, complex plastic surgery will be necessary to reconstruct the face.

### Systematic Oral Screening of All Ambulatory Children

**Stage 0:** Healthy Mouth
- Firm gum
- No edema
- No inflammation (red edge) of the gums around the teeth
- No bad breath
- No pain
- No bleeding

**Stage 1:** Simple Gingivitis
- Swelling of the gums
- Occasional bad breath
- Pain when touch and brushing
- + Or - bleeding of the gums when touching or brushing

**Stage 2:** Acute Noma Edema
- Swelling of the gums
- Inflammation of the gums (severe redness)
- Spontaneous bleeding of the gums
- + Or - gum necrosis (localized to one or a few teeth)
- Sometimes part of the bone visible below the gum

**Stage 3:** Acute Noma Necrosis
- Bad smell
- Gum pain
- Inflammation of the gums (severe redness)
- Swelling of the gums
- Spontaneous bleeding of the gums
- + Or - gum necrosis (localized to one or a few teeth)
- Sometimes part of the bone visible below the gum

**Stage 4:** Cicatrizition
- Immediate referral to the health facility for medical care
- If the patient is not malnourished:
  - Wherever possible refer the child to a dentist or a person capable of cleaning gums and teeth
  - Dental hygiene care and close monitoring
  - Oral analgesics according to the levels of pain
  - Treatment of associated diseases and nutritional supplements if necessary
  - Therapeutic education of the child's caregiver
- If the patient is malnourished:
  - As above but treat malnutrition and add oral antibiotics for 14 days
  - Mouthwash with antiseptic

**Stage 5:** Sequelae
- REFER FOR EMERGENCY ADMISSION TO HOSPITAL
- REFER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO EXPERIENCED NGO IN NOMA OR TO HOSPITAL FOR CLEANING/ REMOVING SEQUESTRA (BONES/ TEETH), ASSESSMENT OF LESIONS AND FUNCTIONAL IMPAIRMENT (MOUTH OPENING MEASUREMENT), PHYSIOTHERAPY

**Message Given to Family and Child**
- Explanation of the disease
- Nutritional education
- Education in oral hygiene
- Education in general hygiene (personal and household)
- When no improvement after 8 days => return the child to the health center for verification of progress and reinforce and repeat messages and explanations mentioned above.