

Scaling and Root Planing

Purpose: Scaling and Root Planing is the gold standard of periodontal treatment, and the first step in treating root surfaces to prevent further bone loss without surgery. Scaling and root planning involves the removal of hard (calcified) deposits on the root surfaces, removal of granulation tissue and bacterial biofilm.

Procedure: Scaling and root planning is an in-office procedure with local anesthetic. Scaling and Root planing may take up to 4 sessions depending on severity of bone loss. Our highly trained hygienist uses a combination of ultrasonic scalers and metal instruments to remove bacterial biofilm and calcified tartar from the root surfaces around the tooth and between the roots of the tooth. Once the root surfaces are smoothed, this creates an environment for attachment between the ligaments that hold the tooth securely in the bony socket. After Scaling and Root planing is performed, the next step is Supportive Periodontal Therapy continuing every 3 to 4 months. At these sessions, anesthetic is often used in deeper pockets for comfort, to ensure that the hygienist is able to disrupt the biofilm. Bacterial biofilm repopulates a deep pocket within 90 days. Periodontal dental clients continue with therapy as a life-long process.

Post-Operative Notes

1. *Response to treatment:* There may be post-operative discomfort (pain, soreness, and sensitivity) which may be transitory or permanent, related to hot and cold stimuli, contact with teeth, and sweet and sour foods. The gums will also be sore and may bleed during and following treatment.
2. *Recession of the gums after treatment:* After healing occurs, there may be gum recession which exposes the margin or edge of crowns or fillings, increases sensitivity of teeth, created esthetic or cosmetic changes in front teeth which results in longer teeth and wider spaces between teeth. These wider interproximal spaces are more likely to trap food. Patients may notice an increase in mobility (looseness) of the teeth during the healing period.
3. *Postoperative patient responsibility for care:* With the types of treatment required in correcting periodontal problems, it is mandatory that the patient exercise extreme diligence in performing the home care required after treatment, as instructed by the treating Hygienist. It is necessary you maintain a 3-4 month therapy schedule (designated by your Hygienist), so the hygienist can access deeper pocket areas and disrupt the bacteria so that they do not continue to multiply and cause increases in pocket depth and additional bone loss. Without the necessary follow-up care by the patient, the probability of unsatisfactory results is greatly increased.

Home Care for Lifetime Oral Health

1. Brush your teeth twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste. Be sure to brush properly, taking care of each side of every tooth.
2. Brush your tongue (or use another tongue cleaner) once daily.
3. Expect to spend at least 20 minutes a day on your homecare. Floss your teeth (or use another between-the-teeth cleaner) once daily.
4. Drink plenty of water, especially after meals.
5. Eat a healthy diet and limit snacks.

6. Avoid sugary and acidic drinks and foods.
7. Avoid smoking, the use of chewing tobacco, or any form of vape.
8. Inform your hygienist and dentist of all medications prescribed to you and a list of supplements. Often medications alter the production of saliva.
9. Maintain yearly examinations and needed radiographs with your general dentist. After each therapy session we will inform your general dentist regarding your progress, collaborating for optimal care.

NOTE: The quality of the healed result and how long it lasts directly depends on your commitment to daily oral hygiene and continuing care maintenance. It is our goal to never need further intervention. If you have any questions regarding your hygiene or any change in technique following the surgery, please feel free to ask.

Remember, you may contact Dr. Wilde at 360-692-0300 or 360-620-2492 at any time if you are having a problem. It is important for you to know that you are not alone and that we are always available to help, reassure or answer any questions.