

OPEN & AFFORDABLE DENTAL BRACES

SCALING AND ROOT PLANING - POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Scaling and root planing is a non-surgical approach in treating periodontal disease. The purpose of the treatment is to remove bacterial plaque and tartar from around the teeth and under the gum line which will aid in stopping the progression of periodontal disease.

Most patients experience little or no discomfort after scaling and root planing. The most frequent complaints are: slight tenderness of the gum tissue and teeth that are mildly sensitive to cold drinks and foods. You may do the following to minimize any of these inconveniences:

- If anesthetic was used it is recommended that you take ibuprofen before the anesthetic completely wears off to control any discomfort. (600mg every 4-6 hours as needed). Your lips, teeth and tongue may be numb for several hours after the appointment. Avoid chewing until the numbness has completely worn off. Slight swelling of the area is not unusual.
- It is important to maintain good plaque control to promote optimal healing after scaling and root planing. Brush the treated area very lightly the first night. The next day you may begin flossing lightly. It is normal to have some slight bleeding for the first few days when you brush and floss the treated areas. To help soothe gums, rinse 2-3 times a day with warm salt water rinses using 1 teaspoon of salt for every 4 ounces of water. If a medicated mouthwash was prescribed, use it as directed.
- It is not unusual for the teeth to be more sensitive to hot or cold temperatures and/or sweets. This occurs as the gum tissue heals and shrinks in size. Brushing two to three times daily with anti-sensitivity toothpaste or using fluoride rinses may help alleviate this over time. For localized areas you can apply a pea size amount of sensitivity toothpaste to the tooth surface and allow it to sit overnight.
- Refrain from smoking for 24 to 48 hours after scaling and root planing. In addition, smoking will make stable maintenance of periodontal disease difficult. Smoking cessation is highly recommended.
- As the gums heal, they may change shape around the teeth. They should appear less bulbous and red and should tighten around the teeth. This is a positive result of treatment and is part of the healing process.
- Once scaling and root planing is completed, the maintenance appointments are essential for adequate healing and proper maintenance. Maintenance appointments are generally every 3-4 months. When maintenance appointments are not kept, it is likely that patients will require another sequence of scaling and root planing.

Please call the office if you have questions or concerns