



POST - OP INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCALING AND ROOT PLANING

Scaling and root planing is a special type of treatment that goes deep below the gum line to remove contaminated debris, hard crusty tartar and calculus, pus and bacteria. Then, the root surface is smoothed so that gum tissue can more firmly reattach to roots that are clean and smooth thus preventing tooth loss and sensitivity. Because this procedure goes deeper than a regular cleaning, you may experience some temporary discomfort until the gums return to a healthier state. Here are some instructions that will help to make you more comfortable and prevent complications.

- **Be careful** not to bite or chew your lip, cheek or tongue while they are still numb.
- Rinse your mouth 2 to 3 times per day with **warm salt water**. You can make this by mixing one teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of water. Start home care as instructed. At first, be gentle with brushing and flossing.
- Your gums may feel achy and sore for a couple days. Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) or Tylenol will help to eliminate **discomfort**. Do not take aspirin, as it inhibits blood clotting.
- Your teeth and gums may be **temporarily sensitive** to cold foods and liquids. This can be alleviated by first removing plaque from the sensitive tooth (teeth) and then rubbing a dab of a toothpaste specifically for sensitive teeth (such as Sensodyne, Crest Sensitive, or Crest Pro-Health) on the spot. Do not rinse or drink afterward.
- For the next 3 to 4 days, try to eat a **soft diet**. Avoid hard, crunchy foods such as chips, cookies, nuts and popcorn. Also, stay away from hot spicy foods.
- **Swelling** or **jaw stiffness** rarely occurs. If it does, place warm, moist towels to the face in the area of stiffness.
- Please **DO NOT smoke** for at least 24 hours following scaling and root planing procedures. Tobacco smoke is an irritant and delays healing.
- The time and effort **YOU** put into your dental hygiene at home is critical to reduce the risk of **recurring periodontal disease**. It is important to **brush at least twice a day and floss at least once per day**. Also, rinsing with an **antibacterial mouthwash** (such as Listerine or Crest Pro-Health Rinse) is suggested **to reduce bacteria levels**. To maintain healthy gums and teeth we recommend returning to our office at the interval suggested by the dentist or hygienist for **maintenance visits**.
- If you have any **problems** or **questions**, please call our office.