

# Scaling And Root Planing

## What is Scaling and Root Planing

Scaling and Root Planing, or "deep cleaning", is a common dental procedure to treat moderate to advanced gum disease.

Scaling is when your dental hygienist removes all the plaque and tartar (hardened plaque) above and below the gumline, making sure to clean all the way down to the bottom of the pocket.

Root planing consists of smoothing out your teeth roots to help your gums reattach to your teeth. This procedure is usually performed with a local anesthetic to ensure patient comfort.

Treatment is usually performed on different areas in separate visits, and follow-up visits and periodontal maintenance procedures may be necessary to maximize positive results.

## Why is Scaling and Root Planing Necessary

Scaling and Root Planing procedures are necessary after a patient's gums, bones and surrounding tissues become damaged due to periodontal disease (advanced gum disease or periodontitis).

The goal of Scaling/Root Planing is to reduce pocketing around teeth and stimulate healing of the gums.

## Home Care

If an anesthetic was used, wait until numbness has worn off to eat, and be careful not to bite numb lips and tongue.

**Some bleeding, soreness and sensitivity to hot, cold and biting is normal and expected following Scaling and Root Planing procedures.** Use of a sensitivity toothpaste (Sensodyne) and rinsing with warm salt water may be helpful. Bleeding and discomfort should improve over time as the gums heal. Over-the-counter pain medications may be used as needed; avoid tobacco products. Resume your home care regimen of brushing at least twice a day with a soft bristled toothbrush and daily flossing immediately, but be gentle with the area recently treated. Your gum health must be maintained with proper home care, as instructed, and regular dental visits.

