

POST-TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Caring for Your Gums After a Deep Cleaning

POST-TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCALING AND ROOT PLANING

Your deep cleaning removed the plaque, tartar, and bacteria from below the gumline so your gums can heal and reattach to your teeth. Healing takes a little time, and how you care for your mouth over the next several days makes a real difference.

The First 24 Hours

- If numbing medicine was used, avoid eating until the numbness wears off, and be careful not to bite your lip, cheek, or tongue.
- Choose soft, cool, or lukewarm foods for the rest of the day. Avoid spicy, acidic, crunchy, or very hot foods that can irritate tender gums (think mashed potatoes and yogurt, not tortilla chips and hot salsa).
- Mild soreness, tenderness, or aching is normal. An over-the-counter pain reliever, used as directed on the label or as our office recommends, is usually all that is needed.
- Slight bleeding or pink-tinged saliva is common today. If bleeding is heavy or does not ease up, call us.
- Avoid smoking and other tobacco products, ideally throughout healing. Tobacco slows gum healing significantly.

The Next Several Days

- Rinse gently with warm salt water (half a teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) two to three times a day to soothe the gums.
- If we prescribed a medicated rinse or antibiotic, use it exactly as directed and finish the full course.
- Your teeth may be sensitive to cold, heat, or sweets for a few days and sometimes a few weeks. This usually improves on its own. A toothpaste for sensitive teeth can help in the meantime.
- Tenderness when chewing is normal at first. Ease back into your regular diet as comfort allows.

Keeping It Clean (This Is the Important Part)

- Keep brushing and flossing. Clean, plaque-free teeth heal faster. Be gentle the first few days, but do not skip the treated areas.
- A soft-bristled brush and light pressure are all you need. Brushing too hard does not clean better, it just irritates healing gums.
- Some light bleeding with brushing or flossing is expected at first and should steadily decrease as your gums get healthier. Bleeding that increases is a reason to call us.

What to Expect as You Heal

- As swelling goes down and your gums tighten, teeth may look slightly longer or small spaces may appear between them. This is a sign of healing gums, not a problem.
- Your gums should look pinker, feel firmer, and bleed less over the coming weeks.
- Your follow-up and maintenance visits are essential. Gum disease is managed over time, and the schedule we recommend is designed to keep the bacteria from rebuilding below the gumline.

When to Call Us

- Bleeding that is heavy or will not stop with gentle pressure.
- Pain that gets worse after the first few days instead of better.
- Swelling of the gums or face, fever, or signs of infection.
- Sensitivity that is severe or is not improving after a few weeks.