



Post-operative Instructions for Scaling and Root Planing

These important instructions will improve your healing, make you more comfortable and help to prevent possible complications following your treatment.

1. CARE OF YOUR TEETH AND GUMS

Following periodontal treatment, your teeth will be clean and your gums will have an opportunity to heal. However, they will only do so in the absence of any new plaque. It is important for you to commence the oral hygiene procedures that you were instructed in as soon as possible and the better you keep your teeth clean the faster healing and less problems you will experience.

As the gums will be sore to clean for the first few days, mechanical cleaning (toothbrushing, flossing and interdental brushes) will have to be supplemented with use of an antibacterial mouthwash. Once the gums become comfortable enough to clean normally, there is no need for you to use the mouthwash any more as it is the mechanical cleaning of the teeth that is important. Indeed, continued use of the mouthwash in the long term can have side effects such as staining of your teeth and altering your taste.

2. THERMAL SENSITIVITY

Following your treatment, you may find that your teeth have increased sensitivity to hot and cold. This is only temporary and will ease over time. The sensitivity is caused by the roots of the teeth becoming exposed as the gums heal and shrink. The roots of the teeth do not have the protective enamel layer that the crowns of the teeth do and so they experience increased sensitivity. The sensitivity can best be managed by using an anti-sensitive toothpaste to brush your teeth. This then slowly builds up a layer of resistance on the root surfaces over time that can help protect from thermal sensitivity.

3. SORENESS

Due to the nature of the treatment, soreness and discomfort is to be expected once the anaesthetic wears off. This soreness generally peaks at 2 days after treatment before slowly subsiding. It may be managed by taking Ibuprofen (Nurofen) or Paracetamol (Panadol). Should severe pain persist, do not hesitate to call us.

4. RECESSION

As the gums heal following treatment, the swelling caused by the periodontal infection subsides and the gums shrink. This may be evident as increased recession as well as widening gaps between the teeth. It is important to realize that this is a good sign and that oral hygiene procedures must continue.

5. EATING

Whilst the mouth is still numb it is important to not eat anything too hot or too cold or else you may accidentally burn your lips without realizing it. Having something that is too hot may also increase the chances of bleeding by dilating your blood vessels. Once the anaesthetic has worn off, you will be able to eat normally and may prefer to chew on the side that hasn't been recently cleaned. You may choose to avoid eating hard and gritty foods for about 3-4 days to allow your tissues to heal.

6. BLEEDING

Slight oozing from the gums is not uncommon following periodontal treatment, but this should not persist for longer than a few hours. Clotted flecks in the saliva the next day in the morning are to be expected. Please contact us if bleeding persists.

7. ULCERATION

Occasionally mouth ulcers may be noted in the week following treatment. These should be temporary and are best managed with warm salty rinses several times a day. Please contact us if the ulcers persist.

8. SMOKING

Smoking interferes with healing and you will receive better results from your treatment if smoking is avoided entirely. However, if this is not an option for you, try to avoid smoking for at least the first 24 hours following your treatment.

