

Know Before You Go:

SCALING & ROOT PLANING

(Deep Cleaning)



Scaling and root planing is a deep cleaning used to treat gum disease. It removes plaque and hard buildup (tartar) from below the gumline. This helps reduce infection and swelling in the gums.

Gum disease happens when bacteria collect under the gums. Over time, this can cause the gums to pull away from the teeth. If gum disease is not treated, it can lead to bone loss and tooth loss.

What to Expect

A scaling and root planing procedure can occur every 24-36 months, depending on your plan. During the procedure, the dentist or hygienist will:

- remove plaque and tartar from above and below the gums;
- clean infected areas around the teeth; and
- smooth the roots of the teeth to help the gums heal.

The area may be numbed to help keep you comfortable. Treatment may be done in one to two visits, but could be more depending on how serious the gum disease is.

When Deep Cleaning Is Needed

Scaling and root planing may be recommended when gum disease affects several teeth. This includes:

- **either 1-3 teeth (D4342) or 4 or more (D4341) affected teeth in the same area of the mouth;** and
- **gum measurements that show deep or unhealthy spaces around the teeth.**

In addition, **at least one** of the following must be present:

- X rays that show tartar on the roots of the teeth; or
- X rays that show loss of bone that supports the teeth.

If Deep Cleaning Is Not Approved

If scaling and root planing is not approved, your dentist may talk with you about other care options. These may include:

- regular cleanings to help control plaque and tartar;
- improved daily brushing and flossing at home;
- special toothpaste or mouth rinse to help reduce bacteria; or
- checking your gums again at a future visit.

Your dentist may also monitor your gum health over time to see if your condition changes.

If your scaling and root planing has been approved, it is important to follow your dentist's guidance and keep regular dental visits. Early care can help prevent gum disease from getting worse.

