

Root planing and scaling seems to be a procedure that causes so much confusion for patients. What is the difference between a “routine cleaning” versus a deep cleaning? Scaling and Root Planing is done to remove tartar and hard crusty calculus, that is loaded with bacteria, around and **BELOW** the gum line. A professional polishing (regular cleaning) or prophylactic (prophy) cleaning removes *only* the *soft sticky* plaque that is *above the gum line*. Scaling / root planing is a method of treating gum disease when the pockets around the teeth have a measurement greater than 3mm.



Hard crusty calculus

1. **Scaling**

Scaling is procedure that meticulously removes contamination, toxins, micro-organisms, plaque, tartar, cementum, dentin that is rough and/or permeated by calculus from around, below and under the gum line down to the bottom of the pocket. This is done to remove biofilm, calculus, and toxins down to the bottom of each periodontal pocket in order to obtain a healing response.



2. **Root Planing**

Root planing involves *smoothing the root surfaces* of your teeth with thin curettes so gum tissue can more firmly reattach to roots that are clean and smooth to prevent tooth loss and sensitivity problems. The procedure makes it more difficult for plaque to accumulate along the root surfaces.



Because this procedure goes deeper than a normal cleaning, your mouth may be numbed. The cleaning may take two visits to complete. Depending on the extent of the disease you may need one or more sections (quadrants) of the mouth to be treated with scaling and root planing. Treatment may require one or more visits.

This procedure is done:

- ✚ With our ultrasonic machine that both scales and medicates your gum tissue.
- ✚ To control the growth of **harmful bacteria**. (Bacteria above the gum line are less aggressive bacteria whereas the **bacteria below the gum are more destructive and dangerous!**)
- ✚ Helps **gums or pocket wall reattach** firmly to the spotlessly clean root surface to help prevent tooth loss.
- ✚ **Prevents further bleeding** of the gums.
- ✚ **Reduces gum swelling**
- ✚ **Reduces discomfort.**
- ✚ **Decrease tooth sensitivity** due to gum recession.
- ✚ **Prevent bone loss.**
- ✚ **Prevent tooth loss** due to gum disease



Perio Maintenance

This is the type of cleaning you will need 3-4 times a year following root planing and scaling. This cleaning goes deeper than a normal cleaning to make sure we stay on top of the subgingival calculus and tartar.

Home Care After Root Planing and Scaling

1. Rinse with warm salt water frequently (1/2 tsp. salt in 8oz water) to encourage healing and sooth discomfort.
2. Be careful not to bite or chew your lip, cheek or tongue while they are numb. Avoid chewing for 2 hours after this procedure or until numbness has worn off. We don't want you to accidentally bite your cheeks or lips.
3. Drink plenty of fluids, avoid alcohol and soft drinks.
4. Take pain medication according to directions on label for a couple of days to help with the discomfort, avoid Aspirin.
5. Gently [brush](#) and [floss](#) your teeth after each meal.
6. Use your Chlorhexidine and fluoride as instructed to keep the area clean and free of the bacteria that causes plaque and calculus build-up during the healing period.

Homecare after treatment is critical to reduce the risk of recurring periodontal disease.