

# ARROWHEAD LAKES DENTISTRY

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YOUR INDIVIDUAL SITUATION MAY VARY.  
CONSULT YOUR DENTIST FOR SPECIFIC  
RECOMMENDATIONS.**

## Scaling and Root Planing

Periodontal diseases are caused by groups of germs that progressively infect the crevices between the gums and the teeth. The bacteria produce toxins that cause inflammation and induce break down of gums and bone that support the teeth in the jaws. Without treatment over a period of usually ten to twenty years, the destructive inflammation that results rarely causes pain until deep pockets form around the teeth. As the pockets form, the bone resorbs away, the teeth loosen, and the teeth are lost. Factors that may complicate or increase the severity of disease include a poor "bite" or occlusion, smoking and other tobacco products, habitual tooth grinding (bruxism), complex restorative problems, and general health conditions including problems with the immune system.

The treatment of gum disease consist of bacterial control as the primary objective of therapy. Antiseptics, instruments, and procedures decontaminate, disinfect, and detoxify the infected root surfaces. Treatment includes meticulous debridement of root surfaces and irrigations with antiseptic agents to the depth of all pockets. Systemic antibiotics are occasionally utilized in conjunction with local therapy. Self-applied anti-bacterial home therapy must then be used to maintain periodontal health and prevent re-infection. Therapy is carefully monitored and modulated if disease continues in spite of treatment. Modulation includes changes in in-office treatments, self-care agents and delivery systems, and systemic antibiotics. Periodontal surgery and/or referral to a gum specialist, a periodontist, are possible alternatives. Once active therapy succeeds in eliminating disease-producing bacteria and the pockets have shown signs of healing, the maintenance phase will begin. Periodic office visits to evaluate the periodontal health and the self-care treatment are essential to maintain health.

The scaling and root planing has thoroughly cleaned and eliminated the bacteria, plaque, and calculus (tartar) from the periodontal pockets to eliminate periodontal disease. To aid in healing and shrinkage of the pockets, please follow these instructions:

1. Do not eat anything seedy or granular (popcorn, sesame seeds, nuts, etc.) or shredded meats for 2 to 3 days following treatment because these foods could get lodged into the gum pockets.
2. Rinse with warm salt water (1 teaspoon salt in an 8 ounce cup of water) 2 to 3 times daily which will help soothe the gum tissue and speed healing.
3. Continue brushing and flossing and all normal oral hygiene.
4. If you were given a local anesthetic, be careful not to bite your lip, tongue, or cheek for the next several hours while you are still numb.
5. If pain is present, at your option take aspirin, Tylenol, Advil, or other over-the-counter pain medication according to the directions on the label.
6. If you were given a prescription for an antiseptic mouthrinse use at least twice a day as directed and do not eat or drink for 30 minutes after use of the mouthrinse.
7. Baking soda or a baking soda toothpaste may be used for persistent bleeding gums. Electric toothbrushes (such as the SoniCare) are also very effective to control bleeding gums.
8. Periodic regular treatment is important in fighting gum disease. Please make the appropriate recall appointment to maintain oral health.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office.