

Dental Conditions

Root Planing



The goal of root planing is to eliminate the source of periodontal infection by removing the plaque, tartar and bacterial toxins from surfaces of the roots.



Tartar shows up on an x-ray as small white lumps on the sides of the teeth.

Routine cleanings remove plaque and calculus from above the gum line. Root planing removes plaque and calculus from below the gum line.

To keep you comfortable, the dentist usually numbs you before root planing begins. Then, a dental assistant carefully and meticulously planes the root surfaces with special hand tools.



Once the source of infection is removed, your gums begin to heal. As they heal, your gums will tighten around your teeth.

Homecare is the key to maintaining the healing process. Since brushing and flossing only go about three millimeters below the gum line, something more is needed to clean the deeper pockets that come from periodontal disease.



A dental hygienist or assistant will give you the tools and techniques to use at home as part of your treatment.

Normally, root planing is spread across several appointments. That way the hygienist can track the healing and help you fine-tune your homecare efforts.