
What Is Scaling and Root Planing?

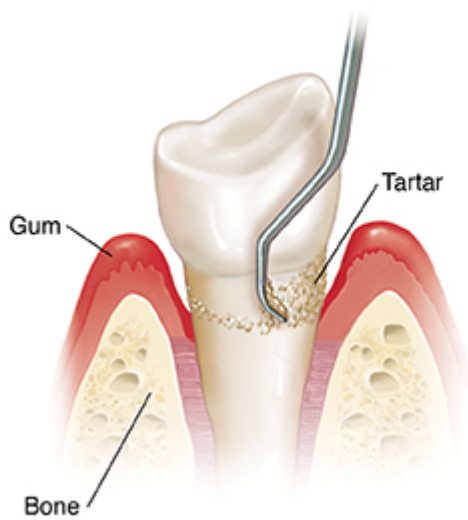
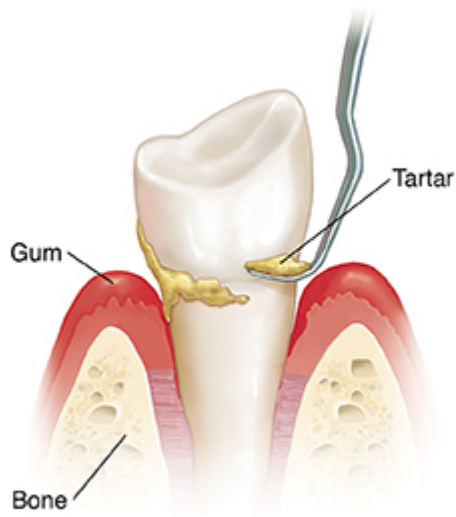
Scaling and root planing is a special type of cleaning done by a dental professional (general dentist, dental hygienist, or periodontist). This cleaning removes plaque and tartar from beneath the gums and smooths the roots of your teeth. It helps restore health to your gums and teeth.

Your evaluation

Your dentist looks at your gums for color changes, bleeding, swelling, and recession. Your teeth are checked for looseness and sensitivity. Full mouth X-rays show if there is bone loss around your teeth.

The procedure

Scaling is when the dentist removes plaque and tartar from below your gum line. This controls the growth of harmful bacteria. Root planing is when the dentist smooths the roots of your teeth. This helps gums reattach firmly to the teeth. Because this procedure goes deeper than a regular cleaning, your mouth may be numbed. The cleaning may take 1 to 4 or more visits to complete.



After your procedure

Your mouth may feel sore and tender after treatment. Keep brushing and flossing your teeth after each meal. Your dentist may tell you to rinse with warm saltwater every few hours. Pain medicine may be suggested if you need it. Ask your dentist if you should use an antimicrobial rinse.