

## Post-Operative Instructions

### Scaling & Root Planing (Deep Cleaning)

Today you received a deep cleaning treatment to remove plaque, tartar, and bacteria from below the gumline. This is an important step in treating periodontal (gum) disease. Please follow these instructions to ensure proper healing and the best possible outcome.

#### What to Expect

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- Your gums, teeth, and jaw may feel sore or tender for several days following treatment. This is completely normal.
- You may experience increased tooth sensitivity to hot, cold, and sweet foods and beverages for 1–2 weeks.
- Some mild bleeding when brushing or flossing for the first few days is expected and will diminish as healing progresses.
- Your gums may appear slightly swollen or look like they have receded as they heal and inflammation decreases — this is normal.

#### Pain & Discomfort Management

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- Take **ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) 400–600 mg every 6 hours** with food as needed for pain and inflammation, unless contraindicated.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be used as an alternative or in combination with ibuprofen.
- Avoid aspirin for pain relief — it can increase bleeding.
- If prescription medications were provided, take them exactly as directed.

#### Eating & Drinking

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- Wait until the anesthetic has fully worn off before eating to avoid accidentally biting your cheek or tongue.
- Eat soft, lukewarm foods for the first 24–48 hours: yogurt, eggs, soup, mashed potatoes, soft pasta, and smoothies.
- Avoid hard, crunchy, or sharp-edged foods (chips, crackers, raw vegetables) that could irritate the gum tissue.
- Avoid very hot or very cold foods and beverages while sensitivity is elevated.
- Avoid alcohol for at least 24 hours, or while taking prescription medications.

#### Oral Hygiene

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- Resume gentle brushing **the same evening** using a soft-bristled toothbrush. Be careful near the treated areas.
- Gentle flossing is encouraged and important — do not skip flossing just because your gums feel tender.
- Rinse with warm salt water (**1/2 tsp salt in 8 oz. warm water**) 2–3 times daily, especially after meals, for the first week.
- If a Chlorhexidine (Peridex) rinse was prescribed, use it twice daily as directed. Do not eat or drink for 30 minutes after use.
- Do not use alcohol-based over-the-counter mouthwash for at least one week.

## Things to Avoid

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- Avoid smoking or tobacco products for at least 72 hours — tobacco significantly impairs gum healing and worsens periodontal disease.
- Avoid strenuous exercise for 24 hours after treatment.
- Do not pick at or probe the treated gum areas with fingers or any object.

## Follow-Up Care

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- A follow-up visit will be scheduled 4–6 weeks after your deep cleaning to evaluate healing and measure your gum pockets.
- Consistent periodontal maintenance cleanings (typically every 3–4 months) are essential to maintaining your results and preventing disease progression.
- Good daily home care — brushing twice daily and flossing once daily — is the most important thing you can do to support your periodontal health.

## Signs to Watch For

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Please contact our office if you notice any of the following:

- Severe pain that is not controlled by over-the-counter medication
- Increasing swelling, redness, or pus around the gum tissue
- Fever or general feeling of illness
- Heavy or prolonged bleeding that does not stop with gentle pressure

**Questions or Concerns? Call Us Anytime.**

Gardens Dentistry • (561) 508-6923

After-hours emergencies: please use the emergency line listed on our voicemail.