

# Periodontal Therapy Instructions

**How long will I be numb?** Your lips, teeth, cheek, and/or tongue may be numb for several hours after the procedure. While you are numb, you should avoid chewing and hot beverages until the numbness has completely worn off.

**Is it normal for my gums or jaw to be sore?** Irritation to the gum tissue can occur from dental work. Rinsing your mouth 2-3 times per day with 1/2 teaspoon of warm salt water can help alleviate discomfort. Injection sites can be sore for several days after your appointment. Over-the-counter pain medications will work well to alleviate the tenderness.

**Is it normal for my gums to bleed when I brush and floss?** You may encounter some bleeding while brushing and flossing. It is important to continue gentle brushing with a soft toothbrush and flossing even if bleeding occurs. As you continue to heal, the bleeding will gradually reduce or disappear.

**Why do I now have spaces between my teeth?** After removal of plaque and tartar buildup, it is common to have spaces between your teeth and gum tissue. Some spaces may appear as "black triangles" near the gum area, whereas other spaces may separate teeth. Flossing and brushing regularly will keep the spaces from building up with plaque and tartar.

**Is it normal for my teeth to be sensitive?** Normal healing results in some tissue tightening and shrinkage which may expose more tooth structure leading to sensitivity to cold, hot, or sweets. This common side effect usually diminishes with time.

**Can I do anything for my sensitivity?** Continue to brush and floss to remove plaque bacteria that produces acids which contribute to tooth sensitivity. Brushing with sensitive toothpaste will help alleviate the sensitivity over a 2-4 week time frame. If the sensitivity lasts longer, contact our office and special fluoride rinses or toothpastes may be prescribed.

**When do I come back after my periodontal therapy?** Normally within 30 days after your periodontal therapy, you will be brought back to the office for reevaluation of the sites treated. At this time we will recommend the time frame of your subsequent periodontal cleanings, called periodontal maintenance or supportive periodontal therapy. These cleanings are usually performed 3-4 times per year and are important to prevent reinfection or possible tooth loss.

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