

## **Post-Periodontal (Gum) Treatment Instructions**

Now that you have taken your first step toward a healthier smile, its time to review how you can maintain this healthy lifestyle.

Periodontitis, also known as gum disease, is a bacterial infection. It can affect the health and appearance of your gums, cause bad breath, and potentially lead to the loss of all your teeth.

**What causes it?** Bacteria in the plaque and calculus cause gum disease. The earliest sign of gum disease is Gingivitis. It can be seen as swollen red gums around the teeth that bleed. Not a good sign! When plaque is allowed to build up, it will harden into calculus and adhere to your teeth. As the calculus starts to accumulate, it will grow under the gums and bring bacteria along with it causing inflammation, bleeding, and the destruction of the supporting bone around the roots of teeth.

**What do I do now?** Maintain a healthier lifestyle by brushing twice a day, once in the morning and once at night after eating diner just before going to bed. It's also imperative that you floss everyday after diner before you brush your teeth. Flossing is very important because your toothbrush cannot clean the areas between your teeth where periodontitis is most likely to start. Do not use toothpicks as they will crush the gums between your teeth and destroy your gums.

Periodontitis is an incurable disease, but with proper daily oral hygiene and periodic periodontal therapy every 4-6 months, it can be prevented from ever coming back! And remember, floss before brushing your teeth. This should be the last thing you do before going to bed.

Depending on the condition of your periodontal health, we will contact your every 4-6 months to inform you of your next periodontal therapy. At that time, please call us to schedule an appointment, so that we can continue to monitor your progress and help you to prevent gum disease from returning.

**What do I do now?** If you have sutures or periodontal dressing placed around your teeth, do not disturb or remove these items. Continue oral hygiene (instructions below) carefully around the surgical site. Brush the exposed tooth surface in the surgical site and all other teeth. If you have a follow up appointment, it is important that you see your doctor on the scheduled date.

### **1) Flossing Tools: Floss (waxed) or Floss with a holding tool.**

Step 1: Slide the floss between two teeth to get underneath the contact area, then using an up and down motion, scrape the front surface of the back tooth, then scrap the back surface of the front tooth. Make sure to jump the floss over the gums between the teeth so you don't hurt your gums. Floss before you brush your teeth.

Step 2: Repeat for each tooth.

### **2) Brushing Tools: Toothbrush with a small head and soft bristles. If you have been using a standard toothbrush, an electric toothbrush may help you to clean your teeth more effectively.**

Step 1: Use a small circular motion to clean one area at a time. DO NOT USE A FORWARD AND BACK MOTION, this will harm the gums and cause gum recession.

Step 2: Also, use a fanning motion starting at the gums and fanning the bristles onto the teeth. Clean one area at a time. DO NOT USE A FORWARD AND BACK MOTION, this will harm the gums and cause gum recession.

Step 3: Brush your tongue using the bristles of your toothbrush for 2 minutes.

Step 4: Rinse with water.

Step 5: Inspect your teeth with a mirror. Your teeth should look shiny, especially at the gum line around your teeth. You can use your fingernail to scrap your teeth to check if plaque is still present.

### **3) Mouthwash: Fluoride containing mouthwash helps reduce cavities and kill bacteria in the mouth. Mouthwash can help to control gingivitis, but it does not replace brushing or flossing.**

Step 1: Use after flossing and brushing for 1 minute. Do Not swallow mouthwash.