

## What to Expect After You Start Periodontal Therapy

Most patients experience little or no discomfort after scaling and root planing. The most frequent complaints are: Slight tenderness of the gum tissue, teeth that are mildly sensitive to cold drinks and foods, and discomfort when eating spicy foods. You may do the following to minimize any of these inconveniences:

### **Over-the-counter medicine (Advil, Aleve, or Tylenol) and Sensodyne toothpaste**

You may want to take some Motrin, Advil or Ibuprofen, an anti-inflammatory and analgesic drug before your anesthesia wears off, to reduce any discomfort. You will be given a prescription for the discomfort if our staff feels the treated areas require more analgesic relief. We will also offer you a tube of Sensodyne desensitizing toothpaste to take home with you.

### **Warm salt-water rinse**

Rinsing as often as you wish with warm salt water (teaspoon of salt in a small cup of warm water) at home will assist in soothing your gums and aid in the healing process.

### **Owning your condition and your success!**

A common challenge patients have is they must accept their involvement in their success! What your professional partners (your dentist, periodontist, and hygienists) do for you with perio therapy is re-establish the healthiest tissue status possible. But this level of health is not maintained if you don't accept that YOU are the therapist treating your teeth and gums the other 362 days of the year. Your professional partners see you once every 3-6 months. You have the opportunity to treat your teeth and gums every day! It is imperative to accept this responsibility and take excellent care of your teeth through regular effective flossing and meticulous brushing as taught by our hygienists and doctors.

### **Re-evaluation (Evaluating your response to periodontal therapy)**

When you have completed your periodontal therapy, Dr. Argersinger or a hygienist will check all treated areas at six weeks. Home care instruction will be reviewed and any questions you may have will be addressed at that time. Any isolated areas of disease that remain and need further treatment will be identified. Sites that have not responded to conventional perio therapy may require an evaluation by a periodontist. A referral to one would be given at this time.

### **Follow-up care changes after deep cleanings**

As Dr. Argersinger described, the degree of 'cleaning' you receive after going through periodontal therapy changes. Instead of simple above-the-gum cleanings, your hygienist will focus her efforts on your teeth as well as your roots and pockets. Our office will recommend perio maintenance cleaning appointments every 3-4 months for a period of 2 years at a minimum. This allows for close monitoring of your periodontal status and guards against periodontal re-infection. These appointments will feel no different than your old regular cleanings. There is a big difference however: your gums will be less inflamed, especially if you are doing your part at home.