



# Scaling and root planing

Also known as: Deep cleaning • Deep gum cleaning • Non-surgical periodontal therapy

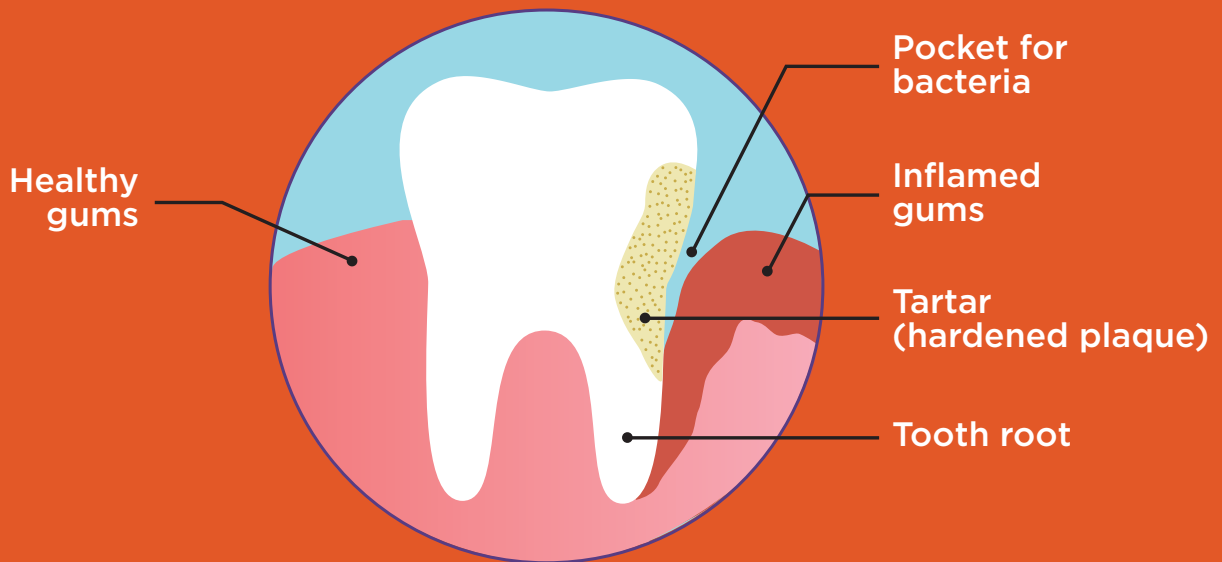
## Treat your gums

### What is scaling and root planing?

Despite the intimidating name, scaling and root planing is a pretty straightforward procedure for treating gum disease. First, the dentist or hygienist cleans the tartar (hardened plaque) from your tooth roots. This is known as scaling. Then, he or she smooths the surface, a process called root planing, which makes it easier for your gums to reattach.

### Do I need it?

Scaling and root planing is only required if you've been diagnosed with a serious stage of gum disease (periodontitis).



## Did you know?

Before beginning the deep cleaning treatment, the dentist or hygienist will numb your gums so it doesn't hurt.

## Signs that you might need scaling and root planing:

- The gums have pulled away from the teeth, forming deep pockets of at least 4mm
- Gum infection has resulted in bone loss
- The roots of the teeth have tartar (mineral deposits) on them

## Is this procedure just a very thorough cleaning?

**No.** Scaling and root planing is a different procedure than a regular cleaning. It can be called a “deep cleaning,” which may be the source of the confusion. Everyone can benefit from a regular cleaning, but only people with severe gum disease should have scaling and root planing.



## How can I help keep my gums healthy?

- Brush your teeth twice a day and floss at least once a day
- Visit your dentist for regular cleanings and exams to track the progress of your gums
- Avoid cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and all other forms of tobacco
- Lower your alcohol intake, or avoid alcohol entirely
- Eat a balanced diet rich in vitamin C
- Drink water frequently throughout the day



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