

## Periodontal Gum Treatment

### What is gum disease?

Gum disease is caused by the germs (bacteria), which live in your mouth. The bacteria stick to your teeth, irritate the gums and make them bleed. Gum disease can eventually destroy the gum and bone, which supports your teeth.

Some people have more severe gum disease than others. This can have specific causes such as diabetes or smoking, but some people are just more prone to gum disease.

### What is periodontal treatment?

Periodontal treatment is the deep thorough cleaning of your teeth and gums to help control the bacteria that causes gum disease.

### What happens during the initial periodontal treatment?

We will remove the “tartar” (calculus) caused by bacteria from above the gum line by cleaning (scaling) the teeth. Added to this we also remove the bacteria, loose gum tissue and “tartar” under the gum. This involves the use of fine powered and hand operated cleaning instruments on the tooth surfaces.

Gum treatment usually involves one to two appointments of deep gum cleaning. This is followed by appointments to monitor healing.

### What are the benefits? Why should I have periodontal treatment?

After periodontal treatment your gum will become healthier, which will help you keep your teeth longer. This improvement will depend on how good your cleaning becomes and how severe your disease was to start with. If your gums bleed, are red or are swollen this will reduce significantly. If your gums are sore, treatment should help and if your teeth feel loose they may feel firmer after treatment. Your breath may become fresher.

## What are the risks?

Treatment can result in a small amount of discomfort and slight increase in sensitivity, which usually lasts only a short time. You may also notice a slight increase in shrinkage of the gums as the swollen and inflamed tissue heal. This shrinkage of the tissue may show in the form of so-called “black triangles” between your teeth.

## Are there any alternatives?

**No treatment.** The result of not having treatment will depend on how severe your gum disease is. You should be aware that this could have a negative effect on the prognosis of the teeth with gum disease. An increased risk of disease progression, which may result in tooth loss, will result if gum disease is left untreated.

**Extractions.** Removal (extraction) of teeth may be an acceptable alternative treatment if your gum disease is severe. This may mean you accept spaces where tooth/teeth have been removed or have replacements with dentures or bridge or implants. Most people find it easier and more enjoyable to eat with natural teeth than a denture.

## What happens after the procedure?

You will be given postoperative instructions and also a follow up appointment.