

# WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE....

Between a “Regular Cleaning, Root Planing, and Periodontal Maintenance?”



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## What is a Regular Cleaning?

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A regular cleaning is known as a prophylaxis in dental terms. It is described as *removal of plaque, calculus, and stains from the tooth structures*. A regular cleaning is recommended for persons who do not have any bone loss, periodontal disease or infection around their teeth. There should also be no bleeding, mobility of teeth, or gaps where the spaces around the roots of the teeth are exposed. The mouth should be healthy, with no gum or bone problems.

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## What is Periodontal Disease and Root Planing?

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Periodontal disease can be described as an inflammation and/or infection of the gums and bone which support the teeth. Bacterial plaque plus calculus and roughened root surfaces can overwhelm the mouth’s defenses. Unhealthy gum tissue covers eroded bone, resulting in abnormal pockets around the roots. *Left untreated, periodontal disease can result in loss of teeth.*

Root planing and scaling are therapeutic treatments designed to remove toxins and bacteria from the root surfaces of the teeth, allowing the body’s immune system to begin the healing process. Several appointments, treating sections of the mouth, and local anesthesia may be required. The American Academy of Periodontology considers scaling and root surface to be a *critical element in establishing periodontal health.*

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## What is Periodontal Maintenance?

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Periodontal Maintenance is a procedure, *instituted following periodontal therapy, continues at varying intervals, determined by the clinical evaluation of the dentist, for the life of the dentition* (for the life of the teeth) *or any implant, and includes the removal of plaque, calculus, and/or bacteria that in place either above or below the gum lines.*

A Periodontal Maintenance procedure is not the same treatment as a *regular* cleaning. This supportive Periodontal Treatment includes, but may not be limited to: X-Ray review, tooth examination by the dentist, gum and bone examination, scaling and root planing as needed, polishing of teeth as needed, and gums and pocket irrigation with medicine as needed.

Typically, an interval of three months between appointments is effective, but more frequent appointments may be needed. Successful long-term control of the disease and prevention of tooth loss depends on continual, and possibly life-time maintenance.

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I need to come frequently for periodontal maintenance. How often will my insurance pay?

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Many plans pay for periodontal maintenance twice a year, even though most patients require appointments four times a year. Remember, that insurance plans limit the number of exams, cleanings, and periodontal maintenance appointments that they will cover because these are the types of treatments that many people need to have frequently. The good news is that any amount paid reduces what you have to pay out of your own pocket.

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If my insurance will only pay for periodontal maintenance twice a year, why should I have it done more often?

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Your insurance plan can help you pay for the treatment that you need; however, it was never designed to pay for everything. Most plans typically pay a minimum regardless of what you might need as an individual. It is a mistake to let benefits be your sole consideration when you make decisions about your dental condition.

People who have lost their teeth often say that they would pay any amount of money to get them back. Your teeth, smile, attractiveness, ability to chew and enjoy food, and general sense of well-being are dependent on your dental health. It is worth the extra time and expense to keep your teeth for a lifetime.

**Our staff of dedicated and highly trained professionals here at Community Shores Dental will provide you the best, most gentle periodontal gum disease treatment with personalized care. We look forward to helping you achieve a healthy, beautiful, and functional smile you can be proud of.**

## **PERIODONTITIS**

INFLAMMATION OF THE GUMS

