

# SCALING AND CLEANING



## **8- Scaling and cleaning:**

**Scaling and cleaning** (often referred to as dental prophylaxis) are essential procedures in maintaining good oral health. Here's an overview of these procedures, including their steps, benefits, recovery, and potential risks.

### **Scaling and Cleaning Procedure**

#### **1. Examination:**

- **Assessment:** Your dentist or dental hygienist will examine your teeth and gums to identify any signs of plaque, tartar buildup, and gum disease.

#### **1. Scaling:**

- **Plaque and Tartar Removal:** Using specialized tools (such as ultrasonic scalars and hand instruments), the dental professional removes plaque and tartar from the tooth surfaces, particularly below the gum line. This helps to eliminate hardened deposits that can't be removed by regular brushing.

#### **1. Polishing:**

- **Smoothing and Shine:** After scaling, the teeth are polished using gritty toothpaste or polishing compound. This smooth's the surfaces and helps remove any remaining plaque and stains.

#### **1. Flossing:**

- **Clean Between Teeth:** Flossing is done to clean between the teeth and along the gum line, ensuring that any remaining debris

is removed.

#### 1. **Rinsing and Fluoride Application:**

- **Rinsing:** You may be asked to rinse your mouth with a fluoride rinse to help strengthen your teeth and provide additional protection against decay.

### **Benefits of Scaling and Cleaning**

#### 1. **Prevents Gum Disease:**

- **Gum Health:** Regular scaling and cleaning remove plaque and tartar that can lead to gingivitis and periodontitis if not addressed.

#### 1. **Reduces Risk of Tooth Decay:**

- **Decay Prevention:** By removing plaque and tartar, the risk of cavities is reduced, helping to maintain overall dental health.

#### 1. **Improves Oral Hygiene:**

- **Enhanced Cleanliness:** The procedure ensures a cleaner mouth, making it easier to maintain good oral hygiene at home.

#### 1. **Prevents Bad Breath:**

- **Fresh Breath:** Removing plaque and tartar helps eliminate the bacteria that can cause bad breath.

#### 1. **Promotes Healthier Gums:**

- **Gum Care:** Cleaned teeth and gums are less prone to inflammation and infection, contributing to healthier gums.

#### 1. **Aesthetic Improvement:**

- **Brighter Smile:** Polishing can help remove surface stains, leading to a brighter and more polished appearance of your teeth.

### **Recovery After Scaling and Cleaning**

#### 1. **Possible Sensitivity:**

- **Temporary Sensitivity:** You may experience some temporary sensitivity to hot, cold, or sweet foods after the procedure. This usually resolves within a few days.
- **Management:** Over-the-counter pain relievers and using sensitive toothpaste can help manage this sensitivity.

### 1. **Gum Discomfort:**

- **Mild Discomfort:** Your gums might feel slightly sore or irritated for a short period after the cleaning.
- **Care:** Avoiding hard or abrasive foods and maintaining good oral hygiene can help with recovery.

### 1. **Oral Hygiene:**

- **Continued Care:** Continue to brush twice a day and floss daily. Regular check-ups and cleanings are essential to maintain oral health.

## **Risks of Scaling and Cleaning**

### 1. **Gum Irritation:**

- **Possible Issue:** Scaling can sometimes cause minor gum irritation or bleeding, especially if there is existing gum disease.
- **Care:** This is usually temporary and should improve with proper care and good oral hygiene.

### 1. **Sensitivity:**

- **Increased Sensitivity:** The procedure can temporarily increase tooth sensitivity, especially if you have gum recession or exposed tooth roots.

### 1. **Tooth and Gum Issues:**

- **Underlying Conditions:** If there are underlying dental issues, such as severe gum disease or tooth damage, scaling and cleaning may not fully address these problems and could potentially exacerbate existing issues.

### 1. **Infection Risk:**

- **Rare Risk:** In rare cases, there is a small risk of infection if the gum tissue is damaged during the procedure.