

Periodontal Flap Debridement

Introduction

If you have gum pockets that are 5mm or deeper, they may be too difficult to clean by your hygienist using the “closed” approach. As well, there are often grooves on the tooth roots and bony defects which are impossible to reach. In this case, an “open” approach by Dr. Braun provides better access and reduction in pocket depths, so that it is easier for you and your hygienist to maintain.

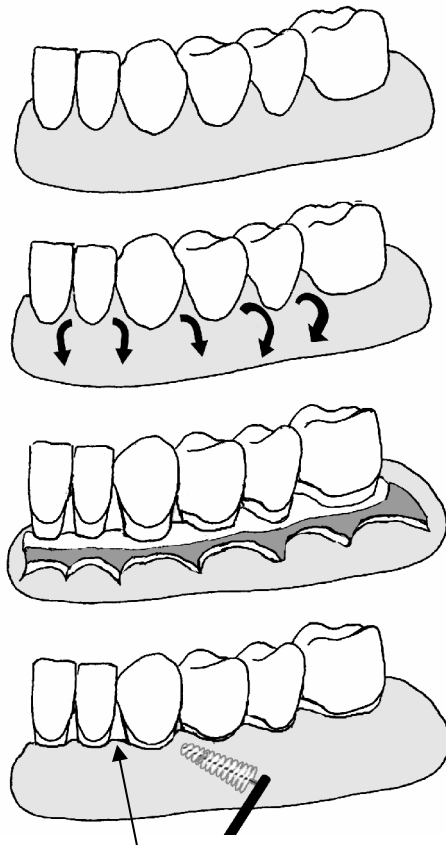
How it's done

Your gums will be numbed so that you do not feel anything. It is our goal to ensure your maximum comfort.

Small incisions will be made between your teeth to allow us to gently reflect the gums away from the roots and bone, allowing access for cleaning.

Once everything is clean, the gums will be placed back in the most optimal position to reduce pockets. Sutures and a special dressing may be used to hold the gums in place and protect the area during healing.

After the gums have healed, it is normal to expect some recession and larger embrasure spaces, as a result of tighter gums and reduction in pockets.



Embrasure (small triangular space) can be cleaned by a proxy brush

Before the procedure

It is important that you eat, drink and take your medications as you normally would, unless otherwise instructed by Dr. Braun. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to talk to us.

After the procedure

Carefully following these instructions will help you understand what to expect and allow you to heal as best as possible:

- Bleeding** – A small amount of bleeding is normal and will correct itself within 24 hours. If bleeding is significant, take a sterile gauze or a tea bag dampened in cold water, shape it as a “U”, and hold it against both sides of the teeth. Apply gentle pressure for 20 minutes and repeat as needed.
- Dressing** – A protective “clay-like” material may be placed on your teeth to cover the area, and will be removed at your next visit. Small particles may chip off or the entire dressing may come out. Unless there is discomfort, the dressing does not need to be replaced. Continue to keep the area clean.
- Swelling** – Some swelling is normal and can be minimized by using ice-packs during the first few hours. Apply to the face for 15 minutes each hour.
- Discomfort** – It is normal for the discomfort to increase for 2 to 3 days before it gets better. During this time, take Tylenol or Advil as prescribed.
- Diet** – Avoid hard, spicy foods, nuts or seeds. Do not chew on the side which had the procedure, or drink hot liquids. A healthy diet of soft foods will make you feel better and be gentle on the area while it is healing.
- Rinsing** – Do not rinse for the first 24 hours. Afterwards, a special rinse (chlorhexidine/Peridex) may be prescribed, to be used as directed. You can also rinse with a solution of ½ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water.
- Brushing** – Gently brush and floss any teeth not covered by dressing. In the area with the dressing, a Q-tip may be used to gently wipe the area clean.
- Other** – If you are concerned, please do not hesitate to call the office.

Maintenance

Since periodontitis is a chronic life-long disease, your gums may require open flap debridement again in the future. To minimize this need, it is important to see your hygienist regularly for cleanings, usually on a 3 or 4 month basis. Prevention is the best medicine!