

# PERIODONTAL THERAPY PROGRAM

## **What is Periodontal Disease?**

Periodontal disease is an infectious and inflammatory disease which destroys the periodontal tissues. These tissues consist of the gums and the bone that support the teeth. That is to say, it is a gum and bone disease. Periodontal disease affects 3 out of 4 adults. It is caused by a growing colony of living bacteria called "plaque". The greatest cause of adult tooth loss is periodontal disease. You may not have noticed any problem, because in the early stages of the disease there is little, if any, pain. Without thorough removal, toxins from plaque cause the disease process to continue. If it continues, it may result in extensive bone destruction and possible tooth loss. With your help, gum disease can be treated and controlled using a periodontal therapy program prescribed especially for you in our office.

This therapy consists of an individualized plan to eliminate infection from your gums and root surfaces. Our hygienists perform treatments to help eliminate infection, make recommendations to help you more effectively clean your teeth daily, and guide you in achieving and maintaining good oral health. You will be working closely with your hygienist.

## **Root Planing**

Root planing is the treatment of the diseased root surfaces below the gumline. A routine cleaning emphasizes cleaning the teeth above the gumline in a healthy mouth. Root planing focuses on eliminating tartar and plaque below the gum and detoxifying the root surfaces where the disease occurs. Obtaining smooth roots and flushing out the pockets with a medicated rinse allows for healthy reattachment of the gums to the root surfaces.

## **Oral Medications, Electric Toothbrushes, and Other Special Tools**

**Chlorhexidine:** a medicated pocket irrigation done at the end of each visit. This will also be used at home for rinsing daily through the therapy. It allows for healthy reattachment of the gums to the root surfaces and reduces the bleeding.

**Fluoride:** a medicated fluoride for daily home use to help control the plaque build up and prevent or reduce sensitivity.

**Electric Toothbrushes and/or Flossing Aids:** a professional homecare plaque control system designed specifically for each patient to remove plaque above and below the gumline and between the teeth where your gum pockets are deeper.

## **What Do We Hope To Accomplish With Periodontal Therapy?**

- ◆ Gums that do not bleed. ~~Healthy gums do not bleed!~~
- ◆ Gums that are not red, swollen, or tender
- ◆ Knowing how to effectively maintain good oral hygiene
- ◆ Fresher breath and taste
- ◆ Reduce pocket depths
- ◆ Control of periodontal disease

## **What Do We Need From You, The Patient, to Make This A Success?**

- ◆ Completion of the periodontal therapy prescribed by your dentist.
- ◆ Thoroughly cleaning all tooth surfaces two times a day with an electric toothbrush and using medicines.
- ◆ Maintenance of regular recare visits.

## **3-Month Periodontal Recare Visits: (starts after all therapy visits are completed)**

Your therapy program is a conservative and non-surgical approach to control periodontal disease. There is NO CURE for periodontal disease; it can only be managed or controlled. The bacteria that causes the disease re-establishes in 3 months after treatment. A 3-Month RECARE visit is critically timed to disrupt this bacteria in pockets greater than four millimeters in order to disable the destructive process at it's critical stage. This critical stage is when the bacteria and their poisons do the most damage to the structures, namely, the periodontal gum attachment. For our patients with periodontitis, a supportive 3-month recare is not an option -- but a requirement -- for successful therapy. Waiting longer than 3 months may result in advanced inflammation and may require redoing the therapy and /or possible surgery.