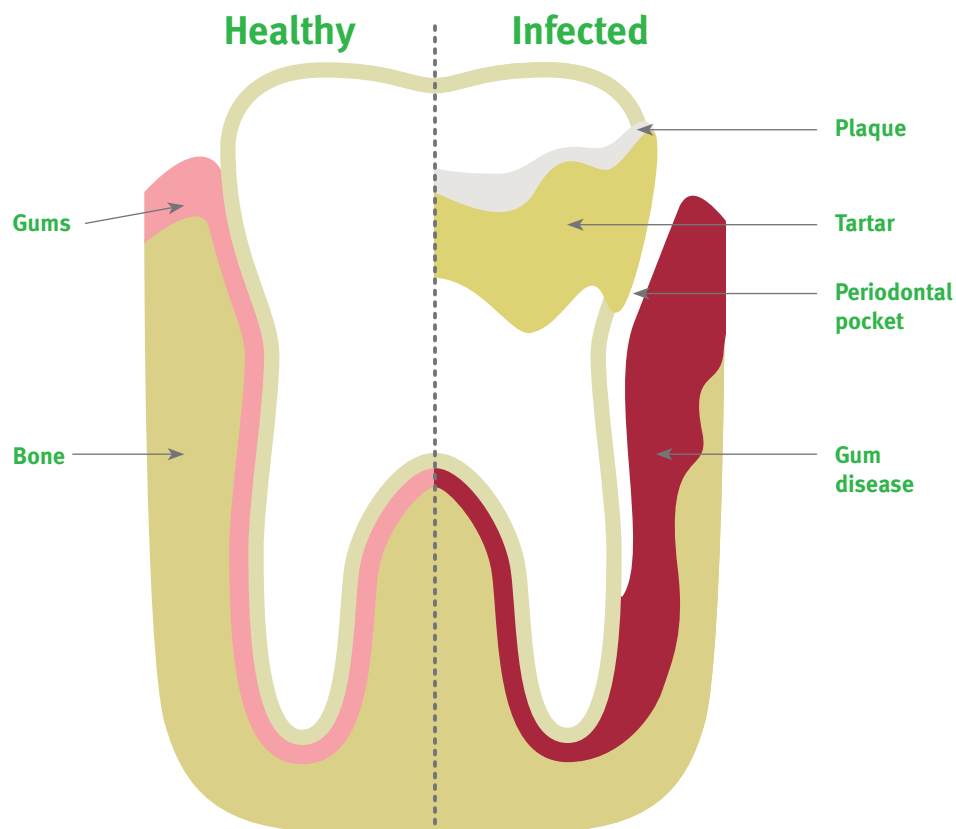




Scaling and Root Planing

What it is:

Scaling is the process of scraping tartar from tooth roots with the same instruments used when you get a regular cleaning. **Planing** is simply smoothing the rough areas from the roots where the tartar had formed. The smooth surface makes it easier for the gum tissue to reattach to the tooth. Scaling and root planing can be performed by a hygienist, general dentist or a dentist who specializes in treating gum disease (periodontist).



Why you would get it:

A scaling and root planing procedure is only recommended for people who have been diagnosed with **periodontal (gum) disease that has caused bone loss**. If you have been diagnosed with periodontal disease, it means your gums have begun to pull away from your teeth's roots, and tartar and plaque have become stuck on the root surfaces. This process will continue and your gums will recede down to the roots unless you take preventive action by scraping the built-up tartar from the roots and making the roots smooth so the gum can reattach. This procedure may need to be repeated every two to three years if problems continue.

Continued on the next page.

How it works:

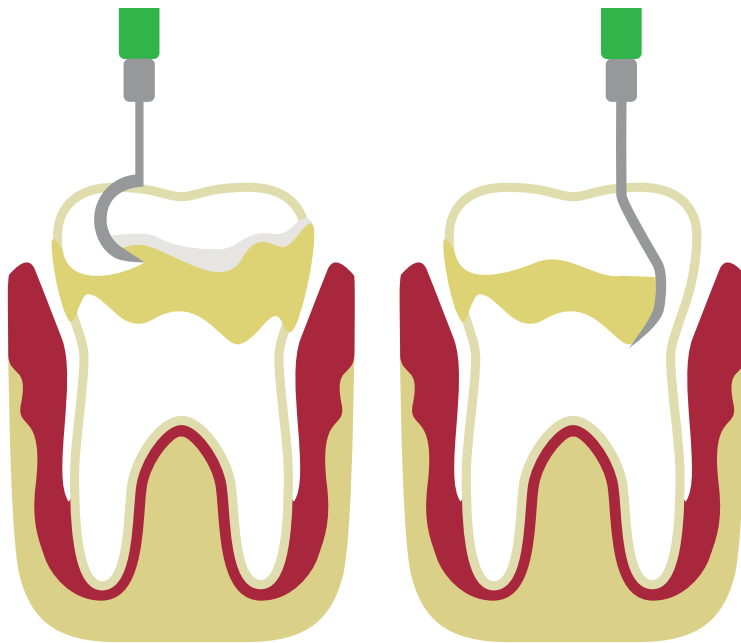
Step 1

After you're seated in the dental chair, your general dentist or periodontist may apply a topical anesthesia gel to your gums or inject a local anesthetic (similar to when you get a filling) to limit discomfort.



Step 2

The scaler (a small scraping tool also used in a regular cleaning) or ultrasonic tool is used to remove the tartar and smooth the surface of the root. Though scaling and root planing is sometimes completed in one session, multiple appointments are typically necessary.



Scaling

Root planing

Step 3

Your dentist may suggest a prescription anti-microbial mouth rinse to help control bacteria in the mouth. Your dentist may also suggest non-aspirin over-the-counter pain medication for any discomfort afterward.

Worth noting:

If you have been diagnosed with periodontal disease, you will likely need more frequent cleaning and periodontal maintenance appointments than once a year. Your dentist or periodontist may recommend two to four visits each year to maintain good periodontal health.



If you have any questions about what your dental plan covers, talk with your dentist or visit DeltaDentalMA.com and sign in to view your benefits information.