

When do you need deeper cleaning? - Smile Solutions

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When do you need deeper cleaning? Deep cleaning is a specific procedure performed by a dental hygienist or periodontist to treat any gum disease, or periodontal disease, that has progressed from gingivitis (early stage) to periodontitis (advanced stage). When you visit Smile Solutions, one of our dental hygienists will perform a periodontal evaluation. They will use an instrument called a periodontal probe to measure the area between your teeth and gums, where plaque and bacteria form. The interface between the teeth and gums are called pockets. Measuring pocket depths is part of any comprehensive dental examination and always takes place before gingivitis treatment. When the gums are healthy the pockets will be no more than four millimetres in depth. If the pockets are five millimetres or greater, this is a sign that your periodontal disease is periodontitis and your dentist or hygienist may recommend a deep cleaning appointment to remove the bacteria, plaque and calculus (tartar). Deep cleaning involves scaling and root planning – that is, the removal of all tartar from the teeth and root surfaces. The dental hygienist can perform scaling and root planing using either an ultrasonic cleaner or manual scaling instruments or a combination of the two. As the patient can sometimes experience sensitivity during deeper cleaning, a local anaesthetic is sometimes used to make the procedure more comfortable. These cleaning sessions can also be divided into two visits, if needed, so that one side of the mouth is cleaned during one visit and the other side during the second visit. The two-visit cleaning process also allows the practitioner to monitor the patient's home oral hygiene and make any changes if needed. A further follow-up visit in two months is strongly recommended. It can take the gums 6 to 8 weeks to fully heal after deep cleaning, so this review is essential to check that your gums are healing as expected and there is a reduction in pocket depth. At this appointment, if the healing and reduction are insufficient then referral to a specialist periodontist may be required for a consultation and determination of future treatment in the form of surgery. Bacteria and plaque will continue to form with normal living, so the need for effective daily removal is of utmost importance to ensure proper healing and avoid a recurrence of periodontal disease. Good home hygiene includes daily brushing, flossing, and the use of inter-dental brushes and mouthwashes as prescribed by your hygienist. At Smile Solutions we recommend a recall of three months after deeper cleaning to verify that the gum health is back to normal. The patient may then be able to go onto a six-monthly recall, subject to the hygienist's assessment at each visit. Articles from Smile Solutions View Blogs Specialist Care Smile Solutions 18 Aug 2026 Endodontist vs Dentist for Root Canal: Why It Makes a Difference Read More General Smile

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