GINGIVAL CURETTAGE AND ROOT PLANING

WHAT IS GINGIVAL CURETTAGE AND ROOT PLANING?

Gingival curettage is the removal of infected soft tissue that lines the gum pocket. Root planning is the removal of calculus deposits from the roots of the teeth and the smoothing of these root surfaces so that the gum tissue will reattach, these procedures are done after the gum tissue is first numbed.

HOW WILL THE GUM TISSUE LOOK AND HOW WILL THE TEETH FEEL AFTER A CURETTAGE AND ROOT PLANING?

The gum tissue will begin to look firmer and pinker. Swelling in the gum as a result of the infection will diminish and spacing may be noticed between the teeth. Some shrinkage of gum tissue around the root may occur. For the first several weeks following curettage and root planning, the root surfaces may be sensitive to cold, hot and some spicy foods.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF A CURETTAGE AND ROOT PLANING ARE NOT DONE?

If the gum infection is not eliminated, further destruction of the jawbone around the teeth will continue. Eventually, the affected teeth will become loose and fall out or must be removed.

WHAT COMPLICATIONS COULD DEVELOP AFTER A CURETTAGE AND ROOT PLANNING?

Complications following curettage and root planning are rare. At times, the gum tissue may bleed for several hours, which is usually stopped with gauze pressure. Sometimes, the gum infection may produce an abscess, which is usually controlled with antibiotics.

CAN THE INFECTION RETURN?

Absolutely! The bacteria that cause periodontal disease are prevalent in the mouth. Good oral hygiene and regular periodontal maintenance cleanings with a hygienist are critical. Maintenance cleaning may be necessary as frequently as every 2-2 months or as infrequently as every 6-12 months. Usually, three month intervals are suggested initially. If deep pockets remain and cannot be kept clean, periodontal surgery may be necessary or bone destruction may continue.