

After a Deep Cleaning (Scaling & Root Planing)

What to Expect in the First Few Weeks

Mild soreness, gum tenderness, and short-lived tooth sensitivity — especially to cold — are the expected norm after a deep cleaning, and they typically settle within days to a few weeks.

The First Few Hours

- If local anesthetic was used, numbness in the lip, tongue, or cheek resolves over one to several hours — avoid chewing on that side until feeling returns.
- Discomfort typically peaks 2-8 hours after treatment and is back to pre-procedure levels by the next morning for most patients.
- A brief, mild fever in the first 24 hours can occur, especially after a full-mouth deep cleaning done in one visit — this is a normal inflammatory response, not infection.

Managing the First Few Days

- An over-the-counter NSAID like ibuprofen, or acetaminophen, manages most discomfort.
- Skip spicy, sharp-edged, or crunchy foods and alcohol (including some mouthwashes) for about 24 hours; avoid seeds or husks for 3-5 days.
- Warm salt-water rinses (1 teaspoon salt in 8 oz warm water, 3x/day) help keep the area comfortable.
- Resume gentle but thorough cleaning: an extra-soft brush for the first day or two, then your normal routine. Oral irrigators can resume after 24 hours.

Cold & Root Sensitivity

Sensitivity often rises over the first week, then declines over the following roughly three weeks, returning close to baseline by 2-4 weeks. A desensitizing toothpaste helps in the meantime.

Why the 4-6 Week Follow-Up Matters

The gum tissue takes about 4-6 weeks to fully heal, which is why we schedule a re-evaluation visit at that interval — good home care and keeping your maintenance visits is what actually determines whether the results hold up long-term.

■ Call us if you notice

Pain or sensitivity that's getting worse, or hasn't started improving, past about 1-2 weeks.

A fever lasting beyond the first day, spreading swelling, or any pus or discharge.

Spontaneous, lingering, or throbbing tooth pain, or pain specifically triggered by heat.