

## PERIODONTAL SURGERY

You have already received some non-surgical treatment for periodontal disease. The treatment included improving your plaque control and scaling the plaque and calculus beneath the gum. This was followed by a period of close monitoring and supportive periodontal care. However, you still have some gum disease remaining in a few areas that may benefit from further treatment.

### What will the procedure involve?

- The area to be treated is made numb with a local anaesthetic injection.
- The edge of the gum is carefully lifted away from the teeth so that all the root surfaces can be seen.
- Any remaining plaque and calculus on the roots are cleaned, with hand and electric scalers.
- Some of the gum may be trimmed so that it has a better fit around the teeth. In some cases, the irregular surfaces of the bone are smoothed.
- Sometimes materials are used to promote new bone formation around the roots. The suitability of this is highly specific to the exact clinical situation however.
- The gum is replaced and secured with a few stitches (sutures), which may need to be removed
- You may need to return monthly to check on the healing and for supportive care for 3 months.

### What are the benefits?

There are different surgical procedures used in different situations. Please discuss the exact type of procedures being suggested with your dentist.

- Sometimes, surgery re-shapes the bone and gum around the roots of the teeth. This can make access for cleaning much easier.
- Periodontal surgery can reduce the gap between the tooth and the gum. Shallow pockets are easier to clean and maintain and this may control your disease better.

### What are the side effects?

- You will not be able to brush the treated teeth immediately after the surgery and will have to use a Chlorhexidine mouthwash for at least 14 days while the stitches are in place.
- The gums will feel sore and you may need to take mild painkillers for a few days.
- Occasionally the gum may bleed and sometimes there is some swelling and bruising of the face near the treated teeth. The teeth may feel looser but this is temporary until healing is complete.
- Tooth sensitivity may be more intense than after root planning but will improve.
- Shrinkage of the gum line will make the teeth look longer with dark spaces in between.

### What are the available alternatives?

- **Regular scaling and root planning** – this may still be necessary, but is usually needed on fewer teeth after surgery.
- **Further root planning with 'adjunctive antibiotics'** - this is usually possible once only.
- **Extraction of some teeth** – may be an acceptable option if your disease is severe and would reduce the time spent treating your gums now and in the future.

### Other issues

- **Smoking** – you should consider quitting. The gum healing will improve if you can stop smoking for at least two weeks after surgery.
- **Certain medical conditions may affect the advice and information we need to give you.** Please make sure you have told us about any problems with your health and about any tablets or medicines you are taking.
- **If there is anything you do not understand or have any further question** – please ask at any convenient time.