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WHAT IS PERIODONTAL SURGERY???

Periodontal surgery is surgery to the gums and tissues beneath them. There are many different types of periodontal surgery but the four most common types are:

- Gingival Surgery (including gingivectomy)
- Periodontal Flap Surgery
- Regeneration Surgery
- Implant Surgery

Your dentist will explain which would be of benefit to you and discuss the technique best suited to your problem.

WHAT ARE THESE TREATMENTS AND WHY MIGHT I NEED THEM???

Gingivectomy

This procedure involves simple trimming of the soft part of the gum to make it easier to keep the teeth clean or to improve appearance. In rare cases, it may help you to eat more comfortably. Gingivectomy is sometimes needed because your gums are too thick and this makes it difficult to keep your teeth clean. Thickness can be caused by a build up of dental plaque over many years. Some drugs can also cause it as a side effect. No stitches are normally needed, but you may have pink dressing placed afterwards.

Periodontal Flap Surgery

Your dentist may advise you to have periodontal surgery. Flap surgery involves the dental surgeon lifting the gum to see the roots of teeth for removing the deposits. It is the most effective way of removing all the calculus from the roots of your teeth. You will need a few small stitches after this procedure.

Regeneration Surgery

Once the periodontal diseases have been stopped, it is sometimes possible to regenerate lost bone from around the roots of teeth. There are many different techniques and your dentist will advise you.

IS PERIODONTAL SURGERY PAINFUL?

Successful periodontal surgery requires a relaxed patient and therefore we aim for no discomfort. The surgery is usually performed under a local anesthetic, so it is advisable to eat a good breakfast or lunch before you attend. A local anesthetic means you would not be put to sleep and you may leave almost straight after the procedure.

ARE THERE ALTERNATIVES TO SURGERY?

Yes, periodontal surgery is generally performed to prolong the life of your teeth for as long as possible. It is normally recommended after non-surgical cleaning of the roots of your teeth has achieved some success, but not total success. If you decided against the surgery, you must accept that the life expectancy of your teeth is likely to be reduced. However further non surgical cleaning and more regular professional tooth cleaning should improve the outlook of your teeth. If you loose your teeth due to periodontal disease your dentist will discuss with you the options available to replace your teeth.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER SURGERY?

You will be given post-operative instructions, which you must follow. Your dentist will advise you about which pain killers to take should you need them. Normally you will be seen after a week to remove any stitches or dressings. You will also be advised about cleaning your mouth during this healing period. If you have any concerns after the surgery you should contact the practice to advise you.

ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS OF SURGERY?

There are a few long term effects of the gum surgery. The main side effect is that your gums will recede a little. This may make your teeth sensitive but there are always ways of helping reduce the sensitivity.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER TREATMENT?

At present, a few forms of periodontal disease are curable. We aim to stop the disease process and to create an environment in your mouth that favors normal bacteria. The long term success depends upon you, the patient. You must maintain levels of oral hygiene that are better than 90% of the population. This is quite a difficult task and requires time and effort on your part together with monitoring and encouragement from your dentist or hygienist. For this reason most patients require at least 3 monthly visits tot eh dentist or hygienist for help and support for the rest of their lives.