



## Periodontal Treatment

The following information describes the various treatments for periodontal disease. They are listed from least to most aggressive:

1. **Do Nothing:** If you elect to do nothing for your periodontal disease, it will continue to progress slowly until you lose the involved teeth one-by-one. This tooth loss can take from a few months to years. Routine dental hygiene visits can increase the possibility of prolonged tooth retention.
2. **Increased frequency of oral hygiene appointments:** Tooth cleanings and scalings are usually performed once every 6 months. Patients with minimal periodontal disease can often control its progress by increasing the frequency of scalings and exams to once every two to four months.
3. **Full Mouth Debridement:** If teeth have not been cleaned for several years an excessive amount of calculus and plaque can accumulate causing inflammation of gum tissues. Debriding the gums with a scaler and medical irrigation can usually stabilize the situation. This is followed by a subsequent routine prophylaxis one month later.
4. **Deep Scaling, Root Planing and increased frequency of oral hygiene appointments:** Removal of calculus from the deepest areas of the periodontal pockets and removal of diseased soft tissue by scaling, usually decreases pocket depth and slows or stops periodontal disease. Routine oral hygiene scaling, polishing and examination is increased to once every two to four months. Antibiotics and rinses may be included in the therapy.
5. **Periodontal Surgery:** In advanced cases it may be necessary to gently reflect the gums from the underlying bone tissue, clean out the infection, sometimes add bone fill in deficient areas, and replace the gums for healing.

In addition to the above treatments, patients are instructed on how to improve their oral hygiene procedures and diet. Smoking is also an extremely negative factor related to periodontal disease, and it should be reduced or preferably stopped.

**If you have any questions please call the MIT Dental Service at 617-253-1501**