



About “Cleanings” and Insurance Coverage

You may have been told by your employer or by your insurance company that your dental insurance pays for “two” cleanings per year. However, there are different types of cleanings by which the insurance **doesn’t** pay 100% of the total cost. The different types of cleanings are **Prophylaxis, Debridement, and Scaling/Root planning.**

Prophylaxis (Prophy)

*The simplest and least expensive type of cleaning is called a prophylaxis. This type of cleaning is what the insurance covers twice per year. A prophylaxis is the routine type of cleaning and **can only be performed on a person who is in good periodontal condition (no gum disease) and who doesn’t have a large build-up of tartar or calculus.** A prophylaxis is considered to be preventive and insurance companies will typically pay all or most of the cost of the prophylaxis.*

Debridement

*Many people, especially those who have not been to the dentist in over a year, or who do not brush and floss often enough will have a **light to moderate** amount of tartar or calculus build-up on their teeth. This build-up is generally on the teeth **above the gum line.** These people will need a more extensive cleaning, known as a Debridement. Some dental insurance will pay 100% for a Debridement.*

Scaling/Root planning

*If your gums bleed when you brush or floss and/or there is **heavy** tartar build-up on your teeth, you may have periodontal disease (gum disease). These signs and others may require what is known as scaling and root planning. This type of cleaning is a thorough cleaning of tartar from **below the gumline.** This is a type of cleaning sometimes referred to as a “deep cleaning”. **Most dental insurances will NOT pay 100% for a deep cleaning and will require you to pay your deductible (if you haven’t already paid your deductible for the year) towards this type of cleaning.***

Most adult teeth are not lost to decay; they are lost to periodontal disease (gum disease). All of these types of cleanings help to fight against periodontal disease. Your own home oral hygiene practices and regular dental visits are extremely important in minimizing dental expenses and assist in keeping your teeth healthy for your entire life.

Your signature below acknowledges that you have read and understand about “cleanings” and insurance coverage:

Patient Signature _____ Date _____