

Visiting the Hygienist

Woodford Dental Care is delighted to be able to offer the services of twelve qualified and experienced dental hygienists. Our hygienists have all had experience of working in general practice, private practice and hospital settings.

For many of our patients at Woodford Dental Care visiting the hygienist will be a new experience. This leaflet is designed to answer some commonly asked questions. If there is anything else you are unsure about please do not hesitate to speak to any member of staff

What is a hygienist?

Dental hygienists are specially trained to work with the Dentist in providing care to patients. They play an important role in dental health care and are mainly concerned with gum health, showing people correct home care to control dental plaque (the bacteria that live on our teeth).

The hygienist's main role is to professionally clean your teeth and give you oral hygiene instructions to be able to prevent gum disease.

Why is this treatment important?

Regular professional cleaning combined with your home care will help keep your mouth healthy. A clean and healthy mouth will improve your appearance. It will also help you to keep your teeth and give you fresh breath.

Will the treatment hurt?

Scaling and polishing is usually pain free.

However, if you do have any discomfort the hygienist can use anaesthetic gels, or give you local anaesthetic. It is important that you let the hygienist know at the time so they can help with any discomfort.

Sometimes, when the gums are very inflamed, you may feel some discomfort when they are cleaned. In these cases, the hygienist may go over your brushing and interdental care to ensure the inflammation subsides before continuing your professional clean at another visit. If you continue to clean your teeth the way the hygienist has shown you the gums will start to heal and the treatment should be more comfortable the next time.

Why doesn't the dentist do this work?

Hygienists have been specially trained to carry out scaling and polishing and can spend longer with you. They are also expert at teaching you how to look after your teeth and gums. At Woodford Dental Care, we have a dentist, Jason Lim, who has a special interest in periodontal (gum) therapy. He works closely with the hygienist to ensure optimum gum treatment for patients who have more severe gum problems. Your dentist or hygienist may refer you to him if this is required.

What will happen at the appointment?

Firstly, the hygienist will check your medical history. This is to ensure that any materials and equipment we use will not interfere with any existing medical conditions or medication.

At the first appointment the hygienist will usually take some measurements of the gum pocket depths. This is an important record which we will use to monitor the progress of your gum condition. The most important thing the hygienist will do is to show you how to keep your teeth free from plaque at home, using methods tailored to you. As you will be looking after your teeth on a daily basis, the work that you put in at home is more important than the cleaning undertaken by the hygienist for preventing gum disease, and if the hygienist can see that the cleaning has been ineffective (for example if there is a lot of plaque left on your teeth or bleeding) then they may spend longer with you showing you how to be more effective with your oral care routine.

At the next appointments the hygienist will start to clean your teeth above and below the gum line and may use a combination of hand instruments and an ultrasonic scaler. Depending on the condition of your gums and how much calculus (tartar) deposits there are, your hygienist may recommend you return for some further appointments.

Normal scaling cannot dislodge fillings, crowns and bridges.

However, if a filling or crown is defective, for example if it has decay underneath it, then it could become loose during the visit. If this did happen then the filling would have needed replacing anyway and you should not worry as scaling would not dislodge fillings on healthy teeth.

Direct Access Appointments

If a patient has not been seen by a dentist at this practice for over two years they can still access hygiene appointments through a direct access appointment. The hygienist needs to take additional measurements and these appointments are longer in length. The fee for a direct access appointment is £126 per 55 minute session and the deposit is £40.

How often do I need to see a hygienist?

Your dentist/hygienist will advise on the length of appointment needed and the frequency. This will be longer/more frequent where there is active gum disease present.

Following the oral hygiene instructions given by our hygienists will help to eliminate active disease and can mean that you require less extensive treatment.

New patients will need a 55minute appointment in order for us to take baseline records of your gum pocket depths. These measurements will then be compared at subsequent appointments to monitor your gum disease.

Bookings

You can make a booking online on our website or by calling the practice on 0208 504 0262.

We do require a deposit at the time of booking to reserve your appointment, which comes off of the balance of your treatment. This is £20 for a 25 minute appointment, £30 for a 40 minute appointment and £40 for a 55 minute appointment.

Cancellations/rearranging appointments

Please note that we require 2 working days notice of cancellation or to move your appointment date/time.

This ensures that we have enough notice to be able to offer the appointment to other patients.

There will be no refund of the deposit without this notice. Patients are responsible for their individual travel arrangements and missed appointments/appointments attended late due to transport/travel or parking problems will still incur a fee. This fee helps towards covering staff wages where a patient cancels at short notice or does not attend -the practice has still lost revenue if a patient has not attended and paid the deposit.

If you are late to your appointment, if it is under half of the appointment time you will be able to have the remainder of your appointment time, the full fee still applies to the appointment. We will not be able to extend your appointment time if you are late as there will be patients booked in after your appointment. If you are late by more than half of the appointment time, your hygienist will not have time to treat you and the deposit will be taken.

We thank you for your understanding.

If you have anything you wish to discuss please speak to any member of staff or telephone us on 0208 504 0262.

To find out more, please visit our website: www.woodforddentalcare.co.uk

At Woodford Dental Care we have two ways you can book to see one of our caring and professional hygienists.

Either you are referred following an oral health assessment with one of our dentists **Or** a booking is made with our hygiene service directly, without seeing a dentist (1 hour appointment).

Initial appointment

(60 minutes) £126

Assessment and measurements to diagnose gum health. The hygienist will guide you on the best methods of cleaning your teeth and gums to remove dental plaque to improve treatment outcomes

You may have some professional cleaning started to assist cleaning better at home. The hygienist will recommend how many further appointments will be required and how often you should be coming back.

Children's appointments

(30 minutes) £68

Instilling good habits early are key to prevent tooth decay, gum disease and bad breath. This will involve professional cleaning to assist cleaning at home.

Simple Scale and Polish

(30 minutes) £68

For low risk patients only – only available on recommendation by dentist/ hygienist.

Active Treatment

(30/60 minutes) £68/£126

Following your initial assessment, intensive professional cleaning to treat and prevent gum disease progressing. Depending on the extent of gum disease this may require a number of appointments

Maintenance

(30/60 minutes) £68/£126

Following a course of active treatment by the hygienist or periodontist you will be required to maintain oral health. This involves professional cleaning at regular intervals often every 3 months.

Orthodontic maintenance

(30/60 minutes) £68/£126

Braces require extra maintenance to prevent tooth decay or gum disease which can affect the health of your mouth. This will also involve professional cleaning to assist cleaning at home.

Airflow Polishing additional £16

The hygienist will be able to inform you whether airflow polishing is suitable for you

Hygiene Service

Complications, Benefits & Alternative Options

Expected complications

- Numbness lasting a few hours.
- Discomfort, swelling and/or bruising lasting a few days.
- Increased sensitivity to cold, hot or sweet stimuli.
- Requirement for maintenance cleaning in the future.

Common risks and complications

- Trauma to other parts of the mouth including teeth, gums, cheeks, tongue etc.
- Possible risk of abscess
- Gum recession and exposure of the root surface and black triangles in between your teeth.

Rare risks and complications

- Trauma to tissues underneath the tooth including bone, sinus, and nerves.
- Allergic reaction to something used during the procedure.

Benefits

- Reduces the causes of periodontal disease to a level manageable by your immune system.
- Prevents widening of spaces and drifting of the teeth.
- Ensures that further progression is prevented and monitored closely.

Alternative options

- Referral to a specialist in this field may be recommended
- Regular hygienist visits as a cosmetic option – will not treat periodontal (gum) disease.
- Treating the tooth in a different way such as extraction.
- Opting to refuse treatment increases the risk of loss of gum strength, which could lead to tooth loss.