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Osseous Surgery, to Treat Gum Disease

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Periodontal or gum disease damages the tissue and bone that support the teeth. Osseous surgery is a procedure that very successfully treats this disease. It is sometimes called pocket reduction, because it reduces the depth of periodontal pockets surrounding the teeth. In a healthy mouth, periodontal pockets should measure 3 millimeters or less. A measurement of 4 millimeters or more may be a cause for concern. Bacteria and calculus buildup cause the pockets to deepen. If periodontal disease is not treated it will result in tooth loss.



A dental hygienist will perform a deep cleaning below the gums to remove the plaque and calculus buildup. Local anesthetic will be administered to keep the patient comfortable. The hygienist may use hand scalers and an ultrasonic scaler which simultaneously vibrates and sprays water to remove particles from the teeth.

A periodontist has many options available for anesthetic and sedation to make the patient comfortable. After the patient is numb, a small incision is made which exposes the bone and the surfaces of the tooth. The root surface of the tooth is thoroughly scaled of all calculus. Bone files are used to smooth the surrounding bone. If there is considerable bone loss, the periodontist may decide to do a bone graft. Artificial bone or cadaver bone may be used. The last step is to trim the tissue and reattach it around the tooth with sutures. This holds the tissue in place during the healing process. A surgical dressing called a periodontal pack may also be placed over the surgical site. The patient will be scheduled for a follow up evaluation.

The tooth may appear slightly longer after the procedure. This is because the slight tissue removal makes more of the tooth visible in the mouth. The tooth may also be sensitive to hot and cold. Fluoride varnishes may be applied to reduce sensitivity.

Prescription medications will be prescribed to aid healing, prevent possible infection, and manage pain. Detailed care instructions will be given to the patient by the dental staff. Maintaining good oral hygiene after the surgery will preserve the teeth and prevent the need for further treatment.

[Contact a Coquitlam periodontist about osseous surgery](#)

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