

## English 301: Michelle O'Neill, Definition Assignment

“The process of dental scaling” post is designed to familiarize English 301 students with explaining a relatively complex process or product to a nontechnical audience using three types of definition [parenthetical, sentence, and expanded].

The criteria for the assignment includes:

- choose a relatively complex term, utilized within your discipline or profession
- specify an audience (non-technical readers) and situation for the term to be defined
- define the term using parenthetical, sentence, and expanded definitions
- utilize at least four expansion strategies
- the inclusion of a minimum of one visual
- utilize a minimum of three sources, cited with MLA or APA style

The objectives of this assignment include:

- understand the important role, audience and purpose as it relates to definitions
- differentiate between different levels of detail based on definition(s)
- be able to effectively select the right definition based on different situations

### **The Process of Dental Scaling**

**Situation:** An independent dental hygienist is building a new practice with an emphasis on catering to people who experience dental anxiety.

**Audience:** A new client to the dental hygiene practice who experiences dental anxiety and finds the sharing of information to be helpful in reducing his stress and anxiety related to dental care.

#### **Parenthetical definition**

Dental scaling (similar to the removal of hard water build up) is a dental process to remove tartar, plaque, and bacteria.

#### **Sentence definition**

Dental scaling is classified as a nonsurgical periodontal therapy, characterized by the use of instruments to scrape or remove deposits (plaque, tartar, and bacteria) which cause inflammation damaging the surrounding gum tissue and bone, from the crown and root surfaces of teeth.

#### **Expanded Definition**

##### **What is Dental Scaling?**

Dental scaling is a nonsurgical dental process to remove tartar, plaque, and bacteria from the crown and root surfaces of teeth to treat or prevent gum disease (Non-Surgical Periodontal Treatment, n.d.). Dental scaling is sometimes referred to as prophylaxis, a Greek word meaning “to prevent beforehand” (The definition of prophylaxis, n.d.).



**Hand scaler tool removing plaque and tartar from the tooth's crown and roots**

(Teeth Scaling, 2016) Retrieved May 25, 2016

## How Does Dental Scaling Work?

A dental hygienist uses specialized instruments (hand scalers/curettes or ultrasonic scalers) to remove inflammatory agents such as plaque, tartar and bacteria from the crown and root surfaces of teeth (Scaling, n.d.). Several tools are used for dental scaling including: hand scalers and ultrasonic scalers. Hand scalers/curettes are shaped to match the surfaces of the teeth and are used with a gentle to moderate pressure in overlapping strokes to ensure complete removal of all deposits on the teeth surfaces (Gehrig, Houseman, & Gehrig, 1996). Ultrasonic scalers (power driven device) vibrate at a frequency to help remove deposits on the teeth surfaces, as well deliver a mist of water that creates a lavage affect and tiny air bubbles that aid in destroying bacteria (Sculean, Schwarz, Berakdar, Romanos, Brecx, Willershausen, & Becker, 2004). The process of dental scaling is done without causing harm or damage to the teeth, leaving the teeth surfaces smooth to prevent or delay the adherence of bacteria.

## Reasons for Dental Scaling



**Before Dental Scaling**

(Teeth Scaling, 2016)



**After Dental Scaling**

(Teeth Scaling, 2016)

A major objective of dental scaling is to remove the deposits from the teeth in order to prevent or halt the destruction of the supporting tissues of the teeth (periodontal disease), which may lead to tooth loss (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, 2013).

The bacteria related with periodontal disease can travel through the bloodstream, negatively impacting systemic health (diabetes, premature birth, heart disease, lung infections) (National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, 2013).

Halitosis (bad breath) may be improved by the removal of bacteria in the oral cavity with the process of dental scaling.

Once tartar has formed, only a dental hygienist or dentist can safely remove it with dental scaling. Regular dental scaling is a safe and effective process to prevent and treat gum disease.

### **Risks Associated with Dental Scaling**

Most often dental scaling side effects are minimal including: an increased sensitivity to hot and cold temperatures, swollen gums, bleeding, and mild postoperative pain or discomfort. Side effects range in duration from no discomfort to discomfort lasting up to 24 hours.

Dental scaling introduces harmful bacteria into the bloodstream, this may lead to infection for those with impaired immune systems and certain heart conditions. The potential for serious infection can be avoided by the use of prophylactic antibiotics prior to dental scaling (Periodontal Disease and Systemic Health, n.d.).

## References

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