

Gingivectomy for Gum Disease

You may need surgery for severe [gum disease \(periodontitis\)](#) if it cannot be cured with [antibiotics](#) or root planing and scaling. A gingivectomy removes and reshapes loose, diseased gum tissue to eliminate pockets between the teeth and gums. A gum specialist (periodontist) can accomplish this procedure.

The doctor will start by numbing your gums with a [local anesthetic](#). Excess gum tissue is either removed or reshaped. You can eat soft foods and drink cool or slightly warm liquids while your gums are healing.

What to Expect After Surgery

You can return to your normal activities once the anesthetic wears off. It takes anywhere from a few days to a few weeks for the gums to heal.

Most gum surgeries are fairly simple and are not too uncomfortable. You can take aspirin, ibuprofen (such as Advil or Motrin), or acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) to reduce pain. After a gingivectomy, it will be easier for you to keep your teeth and gums clean.

The contour or shape of your gums may change.

Why It Is Done

A gingivectomy is typically necessary when certain health conditions or medications have caused the gums to enlarge or scar resulting in deep pockets. The pockets make it hard to clean away [plaque](#). Gingivectomy is usually done before gum disease has damaged the bone supporting your teeth.

How Well It Works

If you maintain good dental care after surgery, a gingivectomy is likely to help stop gum disease. Your gums should become pink and healthy again.