



Post-operative Instructions Gingival Graft

Postoperative care is important following a graft procedure and results are greatly dependent on your care of the grafted site.

Some swelling and discomfort are to be expected after surgery. Inflammation is at its peak between 48 and 72 hours after treatment. After the third day swelling and discomfort should decrease. If swelling increases after day three, call us.

The day of the procedure:

- Keep your head elevated and rest quietly.
- Eat only soft foods or liquid meal replacements and be sure to drink plenty of liquids. Do not use a straw.
- Place an ice-pack on the cheek of the treated area for ten minutes followed by a ten minute break (repeat several times during the first 4 hours after treatment).
Note: do not place ice directly on the skin.
- Take your pain medication as prescribed.
- Some oozing of blood from the palate is to be expected. If bleeding seems excessive apply firm pressure with a moist gauze or tea bag for 40 minutes.

Avoid...sucking, rinsing mouth, frequent spitting, smoking, or exercising for 12 hours.

Surgical stent (to cover the roof of the mouth): If a stent was provided, you are asked to wear it for the remainder of the day of treatment and while eating and sleeping for the next 4 - 5 days. Remove and rinse the stent after eating. Avoid strongly flavored or coloured foods as they will be absorbed by the stent.

Pain Medication:

Follow the instructions on the package for dose and timing. If given both Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen, alternate doses every three hours.

Your next dose of pain medication should be taken at _____.

The **sutures** will dissolve on their own in the next 7 – 10 days. If ends become loose and dangle in the mouth you may cut the dangling ends with scissors. Do not pull on them.

For the next 2 weeks:

- Avoid biting through food with the tooth/teeth where the graft was placed. Cut up food with a knife and chew with the teeth away from the graft area.
- This type of graft goes through a series of color changes during healing. At first it appears yellow/white and later becomes red and finally pink. Avoid tugging on the cheeks or lips to view the graft. Trauma or movement of the graft may result in failure of the graft to attach.
- Avoid brushing the graft area. Other areas of the mouth may be cleaned/brushed normally. After brushing your other teeth in the morning and at night, swish the prescribed mouth-rinse around your mouth for 1 minute and then spit.
- A somewhat soft diet is recommended. Avoid sharp foods such as peanuts, popcorn, nachos, tacos, etc.
- Continue as needed with pain medication.

Emergency Contacts: