

Post-Operative Care for Gum Grafting

There is no healing that occurs for the first 24 hours after a surgical procedure. The natural response to “injury” is swelling. The body always responds to an injury with a predictable inflammatory response, as the first step towards healing. Our post-operative instructions are designed to set up an environment of minimal swelling. Your grafting procedure was performed using a minimally invasive pouch procedure. Because it is a “closed” site, it is more subject to post-operative swelling. It is very important that the post-operative instructions are followed.

CARE OF THE MOUTH

Brushing and Flossing

Begin brushing and flossing the areas not operated on the day following surgery. AVOID THE SURGICAL SITES until given specific brushing instructions at your post-operative visit. You may notice a white film over the surgical sites—this is completely normal.

Anti-Oxidant Gel

At your surgical visit, you will receive AO ProVantage Gel. It is a dental antioxidant that is very soothing and promotes healing.

For one week following surgery during waking hours, apply two pumps of the gel to the surgical site every three hours. After the week following surgery, apply three times per day until your first post-operative appointment. Avoid eating or drinking for 30 minutes after application of the gel.

Electric Toothbrushes

DO NOT use an electric toothbrush such as Sonicare or Oral-B Braun for eight weeks following surgery.

Water Pik

DO NOT use a Water Pik for at least eight weeks following surgery.

EATING

First 24 Hours

Adequate nutrition is essential for normal healing. Following surgery, your diet should be restricted to cold liquids. Yogurt, smoothies, milkshakes, and dietary supplements such as Instant Breakfast or Ensure are good choices. AVOID PEROXIDE, ALCOHOL, CARBONATED BEVERAGES, AND DRINKING THROUGH A STRAW.

After 24 Hours

You may have soft foods that are easily chewed such as cooked vegetables, fish, pasta, and meatloaf. You should use utensils and avoid chewing at the surgical site for two weeks. DO NOT SKIP MEALS. If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort, and heal faster.

ACTIVITIES

Rest

Plan to rest at home the remainder of the day of surgery and the following day. You may read, watch TV or work at your desk at home. When sleeping, elevate your head to decrease swelling.

After 24 Hours

You may return to normal daily routine. For one week following surgery, avoid strenuous activities such as heavy lifting or exercise programs which elevate your heart rate.



MEDICATIONS

Pain Medications

Take pain medication within one hour after treatment with milk, fruit juice, or a full glass of water. Never take pain medication on an empty stomach. This medication may be repeated every three to four hours as needed for discomfort. **DO NOT USE ASPIRIN** or products containing aspirin for one week following surgery. Aspirin, Advil, and Aleve can contribute to bleeding problems. Only the non-aspirin pain reliever, Tylenol, is acceptable.

Antibiotics

Take prescribed antibiotics as directed until all have been taken. You will begin this medication the day prior to surgery.

SWELLING

Swelling is the body's normal reaction to surgery and eventual repair. Your swelling may increase until three days post-operatively. This is completely normal. If you experience an increase in swelling beyond the third day or an increase in discomfort, call our office.

Ice Packs

To help minimize swelling, we recommend ice packs. Place the pack on the outside of your face over the treated area for 10 minutes then remove the pack for 10 minutes. Continue to alternate 10 on, 10 off as much as possible for the first 24 hours after surgery during waking hours.

BLEEDING

Because your graft was placed in a pouch, there will be minimal visible bleeding that will show in your mouth. Sometimes any bleeding in your mouth that mixes with saliva can look like more than it is. If excessive bleeding occurs, please call our office.

SMOKING

DO NOT SMOKE for three weeks after surgery. Smoking is detrimental to healing tissues and will affect the results of surgery. If you can stop smoking for three weeks post-operatively, you may as well quit all together.

SUTURES

We do not use the type of sutures that dissolve by themselves for grafting procedures. This type of suture begins breaking down around 7-10 days after placement. When they start to dissolve, it causes inflammation at the surgical site. Inflammation is not good for the graft and can cause an adverse reaction.

We have used a suture that is Non-Resorbable. This type of suture we use is very clean and repels bacteria. Your sutures will be removed at the two month post-operative visit. There will be very little sensation associated with the suture removal and requires no anesthesia.

It is our sincere desire that you are as comfortable as possible following surgery. If you should have any questions or problems, please call our office for anything at 503-646-2273.