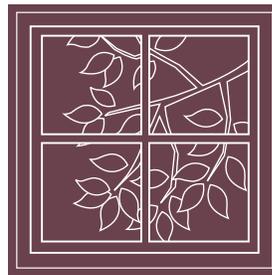


INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING GINGIVAL GRAFT SURGERY



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- Stent:** Leave the stent in for two days without removing it. You may brush and eat over it. If food becomes stuck under it you may remove it for cleaning. After four days, wear the stent as much as necessary if you have discomfort, and leave it out if you are comfortable.
- Bleeding:** Some bleeding is often noted following surgery and may be visible in your saliva. If the roof of the mouth is bleeding, use thumb pressure over the stent for 20 minutes. If bleeding persists, remove the stent and apply moderate pressure with a cotton pad or moist tea bag for 20 minutes. If there is bleeding at the graft site, use gentle pressure with a small piece of cotton. If bleeding cannot be controlled, call our office. For the first 48 hours, minimize activity and exercise. For the first night or two, elevate your head when reclining. Please avoid aspirin and ibuprofen for 7-10 days before surgery.
- Swelling:** Slight swelling or bruising is not unusual. Ice packs are not recommended unless they are used on the cheekbone for upper grafts or under the jaw for lower grafts or if swelling is severe. Infection is rare, but if swelling or pain increase after 3-4 days, call our office.
- Medications:** Anti-inflammatories are helpful for healing as well as for moderate pain. If you can take them, use 600mg ibuprofen (3 Advil) every 4-6 hours or 220-440mg naproxen (1-2 Aleve) every 8-12 hours for at least three days following surgery, and as needed after that. You may use the prescription pain reliever in addition, as needed. Alcohol should not be used with narcotic medications. It is helpful to take all medications with a full glass of lukewarm water and with food if you have a sensitive stomach. If you develop a rash or have any other reactions to the medication, stop taking it and call our office.
- Diet:** Eating should be avoided for the first 3-4 hours after surgery. Avoid chewing on the graft site for the first week for gingival grafts, three weeks for connective tissue grafts, and six weeks for donor grafts. For the first day, avoid hot foods and beverages. For the first week, avoid hard, spicy or acidic foods, and do not use a straw. You must maintain a nutritious, high protein diet and drink plenty of fluids. Eat soft foods such as pasta, mashed potatoes, applesauce, pudding, soup, Jell-O, and chopped or blenderized foods, as well as chicken, fish, and cooked vegetables. Ensure or Slim Fast-type products are a good source of nutrition. Smoking will delay healing.
- Brushing:** You should NOT brush the surgical area with a regular toothbrush until after the stitches are gone for gingival grafts; wait three weeks for connective tissue grafts, and six weeks for donor grafts. Do NOT use an electric toothbrush for six weeks at the grafted areas. An ultra-soft brush, Q-tip or washcloth may be dabbed around the graft and stitches starting the day after the procedure. You should continue to maintain your usual hygiene methods in the other areas of your mouth. Gentle rinsing with warm salt water (1/2 tsp. salt to eight ounces of water) several times a day for a week is recommended. You may use diluted mouthwash (1/2 water) beginning on the second day.