



Gum Graft Procedure Pre-op and Post-op Instructions

Prescriptions:

Prescriptions will be called day of surgery unless requested beforehand. Take your medication as prescribed. Current medications prescribed by your physician should be taken as usual unless you are told to do otherwise. Take pain relieving medicine before the numbness wears off. Staying ahead of the pain is critical to avoid severe discomfort. Do not take pain medication on an empty stomach. Finish all antibiotics prescribed to prevent infection. Patients taking birth control pills should be aware that antibiotics could alter the effectiveness of the birth control pill and result in an unplanned pregnancy.

Peridex rinse (chlorhexidine gluconate) or alcohol-free Listerine should be used twice a day starting the day after surgery to kill bacteria around the surgical area. Inform us if you are prone to experiencing nausea. If needed, we can prescribe an anti-nausea medication. If any oral sedative such as Ativan, Valium, Xanax, and/or Halcion is prescribed before the surgery or if IV sedation was completed during the surgery, you must have someone drive you to and from your surgical appointment and stay with you for the remainder of the day (preferably overnight).

What To Expect:

Swelling is common after surgery, and it should be expected. It usually reaches a peak at 72-96 hours after surgery (3-4 days). Please use the provided ice pack. An anti-inflammatory such as Motrin (ibuprofen) or Aleve (naproxen) is also useful to take as directed the first 3 days after surgery. This will limit the number of inflammatory mediators produced at the surgery site. The combination of ice packs and anti-inflammatories leads to significantly less swelling during the first 3 days. If swelling persists after 7 days and is not resolving, contact your primary care doctor for further instructions.

Visible bruising is to be expected as well. Following the recommendations outlined above will help minimize this.

Bleeding is normal during the first 1-2 days. Cover your pillow with a towel to prevent staining. It is recommended to sleep with your head elevated (extra pillows, recliner chair) to help reduce swelling and bleeding.

AVOID: PEROXIDE, ALCOHOLIC OR CARBONATED BEVERAGES, DRINKING STRAWS, AND SMOKING for the first 3 days. The agents can dissolve any blood clots and can lead to breakthrough bleeding.

Pain:

Following surgery, pain is usually mild to moderate in severity and should be expected. The pain usually persists for 24-48 hours after surgery. If you have severe pain after 72 hours, please contact the office or your doctor. Please take your prescribed pain medications as directed and alternate with ibuprofen to help reduce swelling.

Oral Hygiene Instructions:



Do not brush or floss the teeth around the gum graft site until you return for your post-op visit. All other teeth should be brushed and flossed as normal using a soft toothbrush. At your post-op your doctor will check the surgical site and inform you concerning when you may begin brushing and flossing again at the graft site. It will depend on the healing progression at the surgical site. You should use Peridex or alcohol-free Listerine as prescribed until your first post-op appointment.

Nutrition:

Adequate nutrition is essential for normal healing. The first 24 hours following surgery your diet should be restricted to cold liquids and extremely soft foods that are easily chewed and swallowed. Chew your foods using teeth far removed from the graft sites so that the grafts are not disturbed. Do not skip meals. If you take in nourishment regularly, you feel better, gain strength, experience less discomfort, and heal faster.

Healing:

Wound healing is variable for each individual person. The mouth usually heals at a faster rate than the rest of the body. Initial healing will often result in the wound edges looking red or inflamed and may have some swelling. These are normal symptoms and should not be of concern. We expect the soft tissue to be normal (or almost normal) in appearance after 2-3 weeks post-op.

Sutures:

The sutures may have dissolved by the time you come for your first post-op appointment. If the sutures have not dissolved, then they will be removed at your post-op appointment.

Rest:

Plan to rest the remainder of the day of surgery and the following 2 days. After that time, you should be able to return to your regular schedule, EXCEPT such activities as jogging, aerobic exercise, and other strenuous activities. These should be discontinued for the week following surgery. Use good judgment when returning to strenuous activities. If you feel the sensation of pressure or pulsation at the surgery site, it is often a sign you are overexerting yourself. If you notice these symptoms, discontinue the activity in question until 1-week post-op.

Please call the office with any questions or concerns you may have.