



Gum Grafts

Exposed tooth roots are the result of gum recession. Gum grafts can be used to cover roots, or to develop gum tissue in order to help prevent additional recession and bone loss. During gum graft surgery, your periodontist takes gum tissue from your palate or another donor source to cover the exposed root. This can be done for one tooth or several teeth to even your gum line and reduce sensitivity.

Possible Causes of Recession:

- Periodontal disease
- Improper brushing technique: hard bristled tooth brush, brushing too hard
- Trauma to gum tissues
- Genetics: some patients have a predisposition to weak or thin gum tissues
- Prominent tooth roots or attachment muscles that can pull gums out of place
- Smoking and tobacco use

Treatment for Recession:

There are two types of gum graft surgery:

- **Free Gingival Graft:** A predictable gingival grafting technique used to re-establish the supporting tissue around a tooth. Tissue is taken from the roof of the mouth and moved to the tooth or teeth with recession. A free gingival graft provides a band of thickened attached tissue around the teeth (or implants), which is conducive to good oral hygiene and helps prevent further recession.
- **Connective Tissue Graft:** In cases where there is a need or desire to cover the exposed root of the tooth a connective tissue graft is used. Tissue is taken from the roof of the mouth and moved to the tooth or teeth with recession. The grafted tissue serves to cover the root and provide long term prevention of further recession.

Prevention of Recession:

Receding gums can often be prevented by flossing and brushing properly using a soft toothbrush. Improper technique or brushing vigorously can quickly wear gums away. It is important to visit your dentist regularly so they can monitor any potential areas of recession.

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