



Post-Operative Instructions After Gingival Grafting

Return home and relax today. If you have had intravenous sedation, you will feel groggy for up to 24 hours. It is critical that you do not drive, operate hazardous machinery, make critical decisions, or consume alcohol or drugs with sedative properties during this period.

Pain Control:

Take the prescribed and/or recommended pain medication before the freezing wears off. Take pain medications regularly for the first couple of days, in order to stay ahead of the pain. All medications should be taken after eating to help prevent nausea. If any of your medications cause you significant nausea despite being taken with food, please call our office. Applying an ice pack to the outside of your face, or eating cold food such as ice cream is also very helpful for controlling pain and reducing swelling.

Palatal Stent:

Wear the stent **all the time for the first 24 hours**. The purpose of this is to protect your palate, and to stabilize the forming clot. It is normal for the stent to have blood in it - do not remove it to rinse within the first 24 hours. Taking off the stent too early can cause increased bleeding, swelling and pain.

After 24 hours, remove your stent and rinse with water. Now you can choose to either leave the stent out and only wear for eating, or continue to wear the stent all day, taking it out 2-3x a day to rinse, depending on your preference. On the 5th day after your surgery start to wean off the stent.

Bleeding:

A moderate amount of bleeding or oozing can be expected during the first two days after surgery. If your saliva is light pink, this is normal and does not require any further action. However, if you begin to experience heavier bleeding, with bright red blood in your saliva, please follow the instructions below.

Palate bleeding: Ideally the stent (if you have one) should not be removed for the first 24 hours. You should only address bleeding from the roof of your mouth if the site is bleeding actively and heavily, and blood is filling the stent. If this is the case, remove the stent and apply firm direct pressure on the wound with dampened gauze for 20 to 30 minutes. If you don't have gauze, use a wet black tea bag (tannins in black tea aid in blood clotting). Always remove gauze before sleeping, drinking or eating.

Graft site bleeding: Apply an ice pack to the outside of your face, and rinse very gently with ice cold water as tolerated.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Office
613.234.1211

Dr. Alison McGuire
613.890.3122

Dr. Janelle Hamilton
613.858.9691

Dr. Lyon Hamburg
613.295.0067

Dr. Eugenie MacKay
613.296.5489

Dr. Isabelle Quenneville
613.203.0293

Dr. Amin Alibhai
709.743.4950

Dr. Michael Rapp
613.294.8630

Dr. Karen Fung
613.805.5888

Dr. Sherif Elsaraj
204.440.0000

Dr. Jacob Fitzgerald
613.790.8111



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Mesh, Stitches and Glue:

There may be a mesh under your stent and glue on your gum graft. These materials will fall off naturally - this is normal. **Do not peel them off.** Stitches (if present) may dissolve, come loose, or fall out in approximately 2-7 days. As long as there is no heavy, continuous bleeding this is not a cause for concern. Whether dissolvable or non-dissolvable, **never attempt to remove a stitch on your own.** These areas may feel rough to your tongue- try to avoid touching them with your tongue. **Do not pull back the lips to observe the surgical site** as it can disrupt the graft and compromise healing.

Rinsing & Brushing:

Do not rinse your mouth or brush your teeth until **24 hours after your surgery.** After 24 hours, floss and brush the untreated areas using a soft tooth brush and small amount of toothpaste. **Avoid your newly grafted gums and the roof of your mouth. Do not brush or floss the surgical sites until you have been instructed to by your doctor.** You will receive further instructions at your first post op visit.

After 24 hours, you may begin to rinse your mouth. If a mouth rinse was prescribed, please follow instructions on the bottle. Otherwise you may rinse with 1/2 tsp. of salt dissolved in a glass of warm water. **Do not swish** when rinsing your mouth; instead slightly lower and gently move your head side to side. **Do not spit out the water,** but let it drip out into the sink.

Nutrition:

While lips and/or tongue are numb, do not bite them. During the first 24 hours following the surgery, **avoid hot fluids** (tea, coffee, hot soup) as they may increase bleeding and pain. Limit yourself to a soft diet such as yogurt, apple sauce, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, overcooked pasta for the next 7 days. Drink plenty of fluids, but **do not use straws** for the next 7 days. Avoid foods that break down into hard crunchy bits such as chips, popcorn, whole grain breads, seeds, nuts and raw vegetables. These foods are easily lodged in the surgical site, and are very difficult to rinse out, which may cause an infection. Avoiding these foods for 3-4 weeks is advised.

Activities:

It is not advisable to go to the gym, play sports, or lift heavy objects until 5 days after your surgery, as it may cause bleeding.

Smoking:

Smoking seriously slows the healing process and increases the risk of infection in your mouth. Avoid smoking during the first 5-7 days following the surgery. Reduce smoking as much as possible over the coming weeks for proper healing.

When to call the office:

Feel free to call our office with any questions. Also reach out if you have:

- Heavy, bright red bleeding you have been unable to control with the directions outlined above
- Pain that is not tolerable after taking all medications prescribed/recommended, and applying ice
- Swelling that does not reduce, or increases after 5 days. This could indicate an infection, and may be accompanied by pus, a bad taste or smell, or increasing pain.

Please direct any minor or non-urgent concerns to the office during regular office hours. Should any urgent symptoms occur when the office is closed, please call your surgeon on their emergency number found on the first page.