

Post-Operative Instructions for Periodontal Surgery

Emergency Telephone Number: 541-210-5602

Avoid: Sucking (straws), spitting, or vigorous swishing. The key is preserving blood clots.

Smoking: Smoking delays healing and there are more post-surgical complications in smokers. Do not smoke for as long as possible following the surgery.

Physical Activity: Avoid strenuous exercise or other demanding physical activity for the first 48 hours after surgery.

Numbness/Tingling: The local anesthetic may persist 2-10 hours after the procedure. Be careful to not chew your lip, cheek or tongue while numb. Occasionally, numbness may persist even longer, but usually improves with time.

Bleeding: You may see blood in your saliva for a day or two after surgery. This is normal and you may want to sleep with a towel to protect bedding. If oozing persists, gently remove any loose blood with gauze pad. Sit quietly and compress the gum tissue with a moistened gauze or tea bag for 20-30 minutes. You may have to repeat this process. If bleeding persists, call us.

Swelling: Your face may swell around the treated area. This is normal. Intermittent application of cold and elevating your head slightly during sleep will help minimize swelling during the first day. The swelling will peak at 2-3 days and gradually decrease. Intermittent application of heat will help the swelling subside. Should swelling continue to worsen beyond 3 days, contact us.

Bruising: You may experience slight local bruising. Occasionally, it may extend onto your neck. Bruising should resolve after several days.

Sutures: The sutures/stitches placed in your gums need to be left in place until dissolved on their own (absorbable sutures) or removed by your doctor (non-absorbable sutures; keep your post-op appointment). Avoid playing with or pulling on them. If a suture becomes loose and interferes with your eating, speaking, etc., call us.

Dressing: If a dressing has been used to cover the treated area, avoid brushing the area. The dressing may become loose after a few days. If it dislodges, rinse the area with the prescribed Chlorhexidine rinse, avoid brushing the area and avoid eating in that particular area.

After a graft or a regenerative (bone graft) procedure:

Donor site (roof of your mouth): If a soft tissue graft was taken and you are bleeding from the palate, apply pressure with your thumb using the moistened gauze or tea bag method as mentioned above. If you were given a plastic plate, wear the plate full time until instructed at your first post operative appointment.
Grafted site: Any movement or pressure of the area will compromise the result. Therefore, do not be tempted to look at the graft. If the site bleeds, relax and let it stop on its own.

Pain Medication/Antibiotics: Do not drink alcohol with any prescribed medications. Do not drive or make important decisions if you are taking a narcotic. After the first 2 days, the pain should start subsiding. If the pain persists or gets worse contact us. If an antibiotic has been prescribed for you, make sure to take the medication as directed and for the entire length of time prescribed. If you experience any problems with medications, contact us immediately.

Oral Hygiene: Use the prescribed Chlorhexidine rinse at least twice a day. This mouth rinse may leave a dark stain on teeth, but it can be removed later by dental polishing. If no rinse was prescribed, a mixture of ½ tsp of salt or mouth wash and warm water is also acceptable. Try to brush and floss the areas that were not affected by the surgery, making sure you avoid the surgically treated areas.

Eating: Eat soft foods until instructed at your first post operative appointment. Avoid hot, spicy or crusty foods, especially in the area(s) that received surgery. Drink plenty of fluids. If you had a graft or regenerative surgery, you need to be especially careful to not traumatize the area in any way. Soft foods such as eggs, yogurt, tofu, cottage cheese, ground beef, milk shakes, custard, juices, soups, jello, mashed potatoes, macaroni & cheese, Ensure, Metre-cal, Se-go, Carnation are good sources of needed nutrition.