

Post-Operative Instructions: Bone Grafting

Do not disturb the wound. Avoid rinsing, spitting, or touching the wound on the day of surgery. Be as gentle as you can around the bone grafting area. Try to maintain all graft material at the surgical site.

BLEEDING

Some bleeding or redness in the saliva is normal for 24 hours. Excessive bleeding (where your mouth fills up rapidly with blood) can be controlled by biting on a gauze pad placed directly on the bleeding wound for 60 minutes. Change the gauze pad every 60 minutes as needed. If excessive bleeding continues, please call for further instructions. In general, use as little pressure as is needed. Remove gauze when it is no longer necessary.

SWELLING

Swelling is a normal occurrence after surgery. To minimize swelling, apply an ice pack or a plastic bag or towel filled with ice on the cheek in the area of surgery. Apply the ice continuously, as much as possible, for the first 24 hours, then switch to warm moist heat. Swelling generally reaches a peak in 48–72 hours and then subsides over the next 3–5 days. If swelling begins to increase after the third post-operative day, please contact your doctor immediately.

DIET

Drink plenty of fluids. Avoid hot liquids or foods. Soft foods and liquids should be eaten on the day of surgery. Keep all solid food away from the surgical site.

PAIN

You should begin taking pain medication prior to the local anesthetic wearing off. For moderate pain, ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®) or Aleve® is most beneficial. Ibuprofen bought over the counter comes in 200 mg tablets: 3–4 tablets may be taken every 4–6 hours as needed for pain (no more than 3200 mg in a 24-hour period). For severe pain, the prescribed medication should be taken as directed. Do not take any of the above medication if you are allergic or have been instructed by your doctor not to take it. This may include patients with liver or kidney disease. We are a narcotic-free practice, and narcotic pain medications are not indicated after routine oral surgical procedures.

ANTIBIOTICS

Be sure to take the prescribed antibiotics as directed to help prevent infection — take the entire amount prescribed.

ORAL HYGIENE

Good oral hygiene is essential to good healing. Warm saltwater rinses (½ teaspoon of salt in a cup of warm water) should be used at least 4–5 times a day, especially after meals. If you are given a prescription for Peridex™ Oral Rinse, rinse for 30 seconds and spit twice per day. Do not brush the 2 adjacent teeth on either side of the graft site for the first 7 days. After 7 days, you may gently brush the tooth surfaces of the adjacent teeth as long as the bristles don't disturb the graft site. You may floss normally starting the day of surgery if comfortable.

ACTIVITIES

Keep physical activities to a minimum immediately following surgery. If you are exercising, throbbing or bleeding may occur. If this occurs, you should discontinue exercising. Keep in mind that you are probably not taking normal nourishment. This may weaken you and further limit your ability to exercise.

WEARING YOUR PROSTHESIS

Partial dentures, flippers, or full dentures should not be used immediately after surgery. You may wear these prostheses as soon as it is comfortable, but only if the prosthesis does not touch the graft site.