

Post-Operative Instructions: Bone Graft/Sinus Lift

This video will cover important information regarding proper post-surgical care for a bone graft or sinus lift. Bone grafting is performed to increase the height and/or width of bone available for your implant or implants. Usually, the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of these instructions may apply. Similar procedures can result in varying outcomes between people. Care of your mouth is very important for proper healing. The following instructions will maximize your healing and improve the long-term outcome of your dental implant or implants.

It is very important that you avoid smoking for a minimum of 5 days. In fact, avoiding smoking for the duration of healing will significantly increase the likelihood of a successful bone graft and implant integration. Smoking will increase your bleeding; the nicotine and tar in tobacco impair healing. We cannot warranty implants for our patients who use tobacco (pipe, cigar, cigarette, or chewing).

Do NOT disturb the wound. If you had grafting for socket preservation, there might be a mesh protecting the socket held in with sutures. This will be removed at your 6-week follow-up appointment unless a dissolving mesh has been used. You will be advised of the material used at your surgery appointment. **DO NOT CHEW ON THE SITE UNTIL THE MESH IS REMOVED!**

If you had a sinus lift, **DO NOT** blow your nose or hold back a sneeze for 6 weeks. Afrin® Nasal Spray may be used to help with sinus drainage. A nosebleed can be expected for the first several days. If you had mesh placed to protect the socket, it will be removed after 6 weeks. **DO NOT CHEW ON THE SITE UNTIL THE MESH IS REMOVED!** If only sutures were placed, **DO NOT CHEW ON THE SITE UNTIL YOUR SUTURES ARE REMOVED AT THE 2 WEEK FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT.**

Partial dentures, flippers, or full dentures may be worn as soon as it is comfortable but only if the prosthesis doesn't touch the graft site.

Unless we have instructed you otherwise, do no vigorous physical activity for one week following your surgery. Physical activity increases your blood pressure, which will cause an increase in your swelling, pain, and bleeding. You may gradually increase your activity, such as jogging or tennis, after a week.

Swelling is normal after surgery and can be a cause of discomfort. You should apply ice packs to your face over the surgical areas for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for the first 24 hours to help minimize swelling. Swelling tends to peak 48 hours after surgery. Assume a semi-upright position with your head elevated above your heart when resting.

You may go home with gauze packs in your mouth, but you will need to change them, once you get home, every 15–30 minutes until the bleeding decreases or subsides. You should place the provided gauze packs directly over the surgical sites. If bleeding continues or is excessive, place a non-herbal black tea bag over the surgical sites and bite firmly for 45 minutes to one hour with constant pressure. Repeat if necessary. Some oozing or pink saliva may occur over the next several days.

Plan to rest for the remainder of the surgery day. You should not drive, operate heavy or dangerous equipment, or sign any legal documents for at least 24 hours following general anesthesia.

Take the prescribed pain reliever before the numbness starts to subside, making sure that you have eaten beforehand. If you develop hives or a rash from any of the medications, discontinue them and call our office. Beginning the day before your surgery, you should take up to 2–3 tablets of 200 mg Advil® or ibuprofen, continuing after surgery between each dose of the prescribed pain medication for 4–5 days. Remember, narcotic pain medicine can impair your judgment and reflexes. Take your prescribed antibiotics and continue those until they are gone.

If you feel nauseated, drink small portions of a carbonated drink such as 7UP® or ginger ale every hour for 3 or 4 hours. This will usually terminate your nausea. Bland foods like soda crackers, tea, clear broth, Jell-O®, applesauce, or unbuttered toast can also help with nausea. Avoid all milk and dairy products as long as nausea is present. If you are taking a narcotic, you may also take half the dose or break the pill in half.

If you have been prescribed an antibacterial oral rinse, gently rinse twice a day for 7–10 days, beginning 24 hours after your surgery. Warm saltwater rinses are also recommended, starting the night after surgery. Dissolve one teaspoon of salt with 8 ounces of warm water. Brush your teeth twice daily, being gentle initially around the surgical site.

Protein is necessary for proper tissue production and healing; therefore, we suggest a high-protein soft diet including foods such as scrambled eggs. Increase your fluid intake to at least four 8-ounce glasses per day, but do not use a straw. Gradually increase your diet to solid foods and do not skip meals! This is not a time to diet! If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, and have less discomfort, and this will promote healing.