

Gum Graft -Post Op Instructions

(Graft taken from top of patients mouth)

During most dental surgical procedures, attached gums that surround the necks of teeth are loosened and cleaned. To aid in initial healing, the **loose gum tissue** is lightly held in place by sutures. This loose gum tissue is essential to normal healing as it covers, seals, and nourishes (carries blood supply) to the: tooth root, tooth supporting bone, and the graft materials. It is very important not to disturb the loose gum tissue, because you could dislodge the tissue and compromise the success of the graft.

1. As to **avoid trauma to loose gum tissue** please follow instructions regarding oral hygiene and Diet.
2. **Avoid lifting the lip** with your fingers to look at the area. It is possible to accidentally tear the sutures, open the incision, and delay healing.
3. **Do not apply any finger or tongue pressure** inside or outside of your mouth in the area of your mouth that just received a Bone or Gum Graft.
4. Fragile mucous clots forms at the borders of the loose gum tissue and some minor white patches may be visible early in the healing process. **Do not disturb or rinse out these clots or white patches.** This is typical healing for human tissue.
5. **Avoid facial expressions**, because muscles used during facial expressions will lift and pull your cheeks and lips. Since your cheeks and lips are connected to your oral mucosa and the gums that surround your teeth, facial expressions can loosen or rip sutures, and potentially lift or pull gums away from the necks of teeth and off of the graft.

If you follow the above instructions you will greatly increase your odds of healing normally. **Gum tissue healing occurs two different ways:** "primary intention" and "secondary intention." "Primary intention" is normal healing. During normal healing the loose gum tissue remains vital and stays in place next to the neck of the tooth. Unfortunately some patients will heal by secondary intention. Secondary intention healing means that the loose gum tissue is pulled away and/or dies and new gum tissue grows off of the top of the tooth supporting bone. **Secondary intention healing is much more painful**, and takes longer time period to heal (2-4 weeks).

As an additional protective measure, a **removable surgical stent** has been made in order to protect the donor surgical site on the roof of your mouth. Wear this tray at all times except when "rinsing as directed" or brushing your teeth. Wear this surgical tray (stent) while you are eating. It's in your best interest to keep this stent in position as long as possible (2-7 days).

Misc.

- **Average healing time** for the surgical area is 4 to 6 weeks.
- **Eating** -Avoid chewing in an area that might allow food to come in contact with the surgical site on the roof of your mouth for 1-2 weeks.

Bleeding:

- Minor bleeding or oozing from the roof of your mouth is possible for the first 24 hours and sometimes longer. If you experience more than minor bleeding or oozing from the roof of your mouth, you can apply gentle pressure for 15 minutes with moist gauze or a wet tea bag. Mild bleeding usually stops on its own or slows to an ooze or trickle after 15 minutes of pressure. Tip use a timer! Keep surgical stent in place.
- Do not apply any pressure to the surgical area of your mouth where you just received the gum graft!!!

Medications

- Use Periogard mouth rinse as directed. Patients who graft tissue from the roof of their mouth do not need to take Antibiotics.
- Most patients report some **soreness** during the first week, but most do not take anything more than the ibuprofen. (Ibuprofen 800mg 3/day for 2-3 days).

General

- Periodontal plastic surgery can be used to correct gum recession defects.
- Gum recession is very common across all age groups and both genders.

Our philosophy

Our office remains dedicated to providing optimal care for every patient and working with you to achieve that goal. We pride ourselves on helping you in any way and in continuing to provide the quality of care to which you have become accustomed.