

Soft Tissue Graft Post-Operative Care

There is no healing process that occurs for the first 24 hours after a surgical procedure. The natural response to “injury” is swelling. The body always responds to an injury with a predictable inflammatory response, as the first step towards healing. Our Post-Op instructions are designed to set up an environment of minimal swelling. Because it is a “closed” site, it is more subject to post-operative swelling. It is very important that the post-operative instructions are followed.

Care of the Mouth

Brushing and Flossing: Begin brushing and flossing the areas **not** operated on the day following surgery. **AVOID THE SURGICAL SITES** until given specific brushing instructions at your postoperative visit. Rinse mouth after meals and snacks for seven days with a solution of one-half teaspoonful of salt dissolved in a large glass of warm water (tea temperature). You may notice a white film over the surgical sites. This is completely normal.

Antioxidant Gel (For Soft Tissue Grafting Only): At your surgical visit, you will receive AO Provantage Gel. It is a dental antioxidant that is very soothing and promotes healing.

Apply two pumps to the surgical site every three hours during waking hours the first week after surgery, then 3 times per day until your first post-operative appointment. Avoid eating or drinking for 30 minutes after application of the gel.

Electric Toothbrushes: **DO NOT** use an electric toothbrush such as Sonicare or Oral-B Braun for 8 weeks following your surgery.

Water Pik: **DO NOT** use a Water Pik for at least 8 weeks following surgery.

Medications

For Pain:

Take Tylenol for pain within one hour after treatment with milk, fruit juice, or a full glass of water. Never take pain medication on an empty stomach.

Take one 400 mg dose for pain as needed every 8 hours.

DO NOT USE ASPIRIN or products containing aspirin for one week following surgery

For Infection: Amoxicillin (500 mgs)

Take 2 one hour before appointment

After appointment take 1 every 6 hours

For Sedation: Halcion (0.125 mg)

Take 2 one hour before appointment

Do not eat a heavy meal with Halcion.

You will need a driver to transport you to and from your appointment.

For Inflammation: Dexamethasone (4 mgs)

Take 3 the morning of surgery

Take 2 the day after surgery, then 1 per day for the following 3 days

Swelling

Swelling is the body's normal reaction to surgery and eventual repair. Your swelling may increase until 3 days post-operatively. This is totally normal. If you experience an increase in swelling beyond the third day or an increase in discomfort, call our office.

Ice Packs: To help minimize swelling, we will send you home with ice packs. Place the pack on the outside of your face, over the treated area, for 10 minutes, and then take it off for 10 minutes. Continue to alternate 10 minutes on, 10 minutes off as much as possible the first 24 hours after surgery, during waking hours. You may expect swelling for up to 7-10 days and possibly a fever of 99-100 °F.

Eating

First 24 Hours: Adequate nutrition is essential for normal healing. Following surgery, your diet should be restricted to cold liquids. Yogurt, smoothies, milkshakes and dietary supplements such as Instant Breakfast or Ensure are good choices. **AVOID PEROXIDE, ALCOHOL, CARBONATED BEVERAGES, AND DRINKING THROUGH A STRAW.**

After 24 Hours: You may have soft foods such as cooked vegetables, fish, pasta and meatloaf, which are easily chewed. You should use utensils and avoid chewing at the surgical site for two weeks. **DO NOT SKIP MEALS.** If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster.

Activities

Rest: Plan to rest at home the remainder of the day of surgery and the following day. You may read, watch TV or work at your desk at home. When sleeping, elevate your head to decrease swelling.

After 24 Hours: You may return to normal daily routine, but avoid strenuous activities such as heavy lifting, or exercise programs which elevate your heart rate for one week following surgery.

Bleeding

Minimal visible bleeding is expected after surgery. Sometimes any bleeding in your mouth that mixes with saliva can look like more than it is. Reduce your activity as much as possible for several hours. Avoid eating, drinking and unnecessary talking. These activities may hinder proper healing in the first few hours. Up to 24 hours after the surgery, some oozing of blood may persist. After bleeding has stopped, cautiously resume oral hygiene. If excessive bleeding occurs, please call our office.

Smoking

DO NOT SMOKE for three weeks after surgery. Smoking is detrimental to healing tissues and will affect the results of surgery. If you can stop smoking for three weeks postoperatively, you may as well quit all together.

Sutures

We have used a suture that is Non-Resorbable. This type of suture is very clean and actually repels bacteria. Your sutures will be removed at the post-op visit (two months for soft tissue grafting or two weeks for implants). There will be very little sensation associated with suture removal and requires no anesthesia.

It is our sincere desire that you are as comfortable as possible following surgery. If you should have any questions or problems, please call our office anytime.