



Tissue Graft Post-Op Instructions

General Guidelines: DO NOT, under ANY CIRCUMSTANCE, pull your lip up or down to look at the graft until AFTER the doctor removes your sutures. DO NOT flex your lips to try to look at the graft. Doing so could damage the graft and cause complete FAILURE of the graft. Be gentle/kind to yourself after treatment. Avoid strenuous exercise for 48 hours (or longer if directed by the doctor) after surgery (weight lifting, running, etc), because sharp increases in your blood pressure can cause more bleeding and discomfort at the surgery site. Take all medications as prescribed. Smoking after surgery, especially within the first 24 hours, is not advisable and may cause outright failure of treatment. If you were prescribed antibiotics, take as directed/to completion.

Stitches: If a graft was taken from the roof of your mouth, the stitches there will dissolve in 3-7 days. The stitches at the graft site will be removed by the doctor in 2 weeks at your post-op appointment.

Eating: For the first 24 hours after surgery, do not eat anything spicy or extremely hot in temperature, and do not drink through a straw or spit forcefully. For the next month, hard, sharp or poky foods (i.e. nuts, chips, popcorn, granola, etc) MUST be avoided. We have provided you with a suggestion list of acceptable foods, but these are not the only foods you may eat.

Bleeding: If a graft was taken from the roof of your mouth, seeping from that site for up to 48 hours is normal. If the bleeding bothers you, you may use moist gauze applied with pressure for 5 minutes to control the bleeding. If the site is still seeping, you may apply a moist black tea bag to the area with pressure for 5 minutes. The tannic acid in the tea bag should stop the bleeding. If bleeding is excessive after performing these measures, please call the office.

Swelling: Mild to moderate swelling of both the grafted area and the roof of the mouth are normal. Gently apply an ice pack, covered in a light towel, to the cheek/lip on the side where your graft was done for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off immediately post-op. In the evening after the graft was done, you may use moist heat on your cheek or lip. You may continue with moist heat in the days following if it feels good, but NEVER apply firm pressure to the site.

Pain: Mild to moderate pain is to be expected after a tissue graft. However, for most people, a combination of acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin), are all that are required to control pain. If the doctor has given you a prescription for ibuprofen, take it as directed with 2 tablets of acetaminophen. If the doctor gave you a prescription for Norco, Percocet, or another opioid/narcotic medication, DO NOT take any additional acetaminophen with these medications. If you were given a prescription for antibiotics, make sure you take all of the prescribed amount.

Oral Hygiene: Keeping the graft area clean is ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS. However, you MUST NOT BRUSH/FLOSS/WATERPIK THE GRAFT SITE UNTIL DIRECTED TO DO OTHERWISE following the procedure. For the first two weeks while stitches are present, you will simply swish gently twice a day with the mouth rinse, starting the day after the procedure. **The rinse may cause staining of your teeth and tongue, this is temporary and is not cause for alarm.** You may brush the other areas of your mouth (including your tongue) as you normally would beginning the day after surgery. When the doctor has removed your sutures, you will receive further instructions on the proper way to further clean the area at that time.



SOFT/MUSHY FOOD SUGGESTIONS

Anything put through a blender, EXCEPT fruits/vegetables with small seeds, is acceptable.

Other suggestions:

Eggs any style

Pasta

Soft cheeses

Fish

Ground turkey, ground beef

Mashed potatoes, yams or sweet potatoes

Mashed steamed vegetables

Avocados

Applesauce

Cream of wheat, Malt-o-Meal

Yogurt

Pudding

Ice cream

Creamy peanut butter

Broths or cream soups

You can also supplement your nutrition with vitamins, and Ensure (or another supplement drink of your choice).

Please refer to these instructions first if you have any questions. If your questions are not answered by this sheet, please call us at 775-322-5122.