

Instructions after Gingival/Connective Tissue Graft Surgery

1. Take all medications as directed. Drink plenty of fluids and eat soft foods prior to taking any pain medications. This will help prevent nausea, an upset stomach, and expedite the medication's effects. Avoid drinking alcohol, using heavy machinery, and driving while on medication.
2. It is typical for swelling to occur after surgery. ICE should be applied as quickly as possible to the treated areas. You have been provided with an ice pack. Apply the ice over the treated areas for 5 minutes then off for 10 minutes, and then repeat this as often as possible. Continue ice application the DAY OF AND the DAY AFTER surgery. If swelling and/or bruising continue to occur after the 48 hour post-op period, apply a warm moist compress to the area.
3. A slight (oozing) amount of blood is not unusual for the first 48 hours after surgery. Avoid spitting and the use of a straw to drink as the suction action disrupts the natural clotting process. If bleeding is excessive or continuous, do not rinse. Recline with head elevated as much as possible even when resting. Often, physical activity can stimulate bleeding. You may apply moist gauze or a tea bag over the area maintaining firm pressure for 20 minutes. You may GENTLY rinse out your mouth with warm saltwater rinses: mix 1 teaspoon of salt into a glass of warm water. Rinse 3-6 times a day for the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Please follow instructions for rinsing with Peridex/Chlorhexadine prescription as well.
4. If the graft tissue was obtained from the roof of your mouth, expect discomfort in this area for several days. Avoid coarse foods for 5-7 days so that the area can heal. If a packing was placed over the graft area, this packing may come off on its own, if not it will be removed at your first post-op visit (1 week following surgery).
5. DO NOT brush or floss the area(s) for 2 weeks following the surgery, THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT! You may brush the rest of your teeth with a manual toothbrush, not an electric.
6. Get plenty of REST. Do not exercise for the first week after surgery as the heart rate will increase and thus bleeding will increase.
7. Adequate nutrition is essential for your comfort and for normal healing. Eating can prevent nausea associated with certain medications. A high protein, soft diet is desirable with plenty of fluids especially water and milk following surgery. Please see the soft foods list. Please avoid hot, spicy, or acidic foods for the first 48 hours after surgery.
8. Please refrain from smoking after surgery. Smoking is the number one factor in causing pain and delayed healing.
9. Do not consume alcoholic beverages until the healing process is complete or while you are taking medication.
10. Do not pull on the lips or cheeks in the area of the graft for at least 2 weeks after surgery. Try not to bump the area where the graft was placed. Avoid eating coarse, crisp, or chewy foods until after your post-op visit, (this should be scheduled for 1 week following surgery).
11. Do not hesitate to call **Dr. Conway** if you have any questions prior to your post-op appointment. She can be reached at **404-964-5511**.