

**Specialists in Periodontics,  
Implants, Laser Dentistry**

Diplomates of the American Board of Periodontology

**Soft Tissue Graft Post-Operative Instructions**

Do NOT eat anything until the anesthesia wears off, as you might bite your lips, cheek, or tongue and cause damage. You will probably have some discomfort when the anesthesia wears off; take your **non-aspirin** pain medication(s) as directed, whether it is prescribed or over-the-counter.

**Medications:**

- Please take **Ibuprofen or Advil 800 mg** (equal to **4 tabs of over-the-counter** Ibuprofen or Advil) every 4-6 hours for the next 3-5 days.
  - Please take it as instructed, whether the area hurts or does not hurt!!!
  - Do NOT exceed 2400 mg (12 tabs) in a 24 hour period!!!

**AND/OR** (*You may alternate Ibuprofen and Tylenol pain medications for better pain coverage*)

- Please take **Extra Strength Tylenol 1000 mg** (equal to **2 tabs of over-the-counter** Extra Strength Tylenol) every 4-6 hours for the next 3-5 days.
  - Please take it as instructed, whether the area hurts or does not hurt!!!
  - Do NOT exceed 4000 mg (8 tabs) in a 24 hour period!!!
  - **AVOID OVERDOSE! If and when you are taking Vicodin / Tylenol #3 / Percocet / Tramadol, please only take 1 tab of Extra Strength Tylenol.** These prescription medications contain Tylenol.

→ You may have been given a prescription for a stronger pain reliever. This may be filled at any pharmacy if the over-the-counter pain medication does not relieve your discomfort. If Vicodin / Tylenol #3 / Ultram / Percocet is too strong, you can cut the pill in half. Please do NOT drive or operate heavy machinery while you are taking Vicodin / Tylenol #3 / Ultram / Percocet.

**Discomfort:**

Slight swelling of the operated area is not unusual. Chapped lips or bruising of the lips/cheek area may occur.

- A reusable ice bag or a frozen vegetable bag, wrapped in a soft towel, may be applied to the area of surgery to help minimize the swelling of your face. **Alternating 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off** will usually be adequate during the **first 24-48 hours after surgery**.
- Keeping **your head elevated above your heart** will also help. **Most swelling can occur in the morning and up to 3 days after surgery.** Avoid sleeping/laying on the side that surgery was performed.
- Two days after surgery, moist heat will help resolve minor swelling. Major swelling should be reported to the doctor at once.

You may experience some tooth sensitivity after surgery, especially to cold. Sensitivity usually decreases within several weeks after surgery and can be minimized by keeping the area as free of plaque as possible. If the sensitivity is extreme, contact the doctor for recommendations or medications to relieve the discomfort.

- **IF** you are instructed to wear a **clear appliance or an upper denture that covers up the roof of the mouth**, do **NOT REMOVE it for 24 hours NO MATTER WHAT!!!** It may pool with blood, but leave it in there and just swoosh with Chlorhexidine rinse or lukewarm salt water.
  - After 24 hours you are to wear it as much as you please, especially while you eat for your comfort.

### Dressing:

We may apply a periodontal surgical dressing to protect the surgical site and keep you comfortable. The dressing will harden in a few hours. In most cases the dressing is left in the mouth for a period of 7-14 days and may be changed once or more by the doctor during this time. **Try to keep the dressing in place until your next appointment. If the dressing becomes loose or comes off, do not try to push it back. Call our office to notify the doctor and receive further instructions.** Maintain normal oral hygiene measures in the areas of your mouth not affected by the surgery. In areas where there is dressing, lightly brush only the biting surfaces of the teeth.

→ Please chew on the opposite side of your mouth and try to avoid the dressing as much as possible.

→ Be sure to keep your post-operative appointment to allow for removal of any dressings or sutures and to assess your healing!!!

### Bleeding:

Minor bleeding, such as a pinkish tinge to your saliva, may occur during the first 48 hours following surgery. Avoid extremely hot foods for **the rest of the day** and do NOT rinse out your mouth, as these will often prolong the bleeding. **If bleeding continues, apply light pressure to the area with a moistened gauze or moistened tea bag. Keep in place for 20-30 minutes without looking to see if the bleeding has stopped. (NO PEEKING!) Do not spit or rinse forcefully.** If bleeding increases or occurs past the initial 48 hours, please call our office as soon as possible to notify the doctor and receive further instructions. Avoid any strenuous physical activity for the next 2-3 days to prevent or minimize severe bleeding.

### Eating / Diet:

**Please follow a soft food diet, taking care to avoid the surgical area(s) when chewing. Chew on the opposite side and do NOT bite into food if the procedure was done in the front of the mouth.** Avoid sticky, hard (such as ice cubes, nuts, popcorn, chips), brittle, spicy, highly seasoned, or acidic foods in your diet. Foods such as soups, pasta, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, macaroni & cheese etc. are best. Be sure to maintain adequate nutrition and drink plenty of fluids.

**Avoid alcohol (even beer and wine) and smoking until after your post-operative appointment.**

**Smoking is not advised during the 7-14 days following surgery.**

### Homecare:

Maintain normal oral hygiene measures in the areas of your mouth not affected by the surgery. In areas where there is dressing, lightly brush only the biting surfaces of the teeth. After you have eaten or you have snacked, please use lukewarm salt water rinse 4-6X a day; 30 seconds of swooshing with each use. **Vigorous rinsing should be avoided!**

### Starting tomorrow:

→ Please use Periogard, Peridex, or Chlorhexidine mouth rinse 2X (morning and night) a day; 30 seconds of swooshing with each use.

→ The doctor may recommend using a soft Q-tip or cotton swab with toothpaste to gently clean tooth surfaces in operated area

→ Unless otherwise instructed, avoid flossing and regular tooth brushing of affected area

### Avoid:

- **Please do NOT play with the surgery area with your fingers or tongue.**
- **Do NOT pull up or down the lip or cheek to look at the area and do not have someone else look at the area. Just LEAVE IT ALONE!**
- **Do NOT use a drinking straw, as the suction may dislodge the blood clot.**
- **Avoid extremely hot foods. Cold foods such as ice cream or shake are OK as long as you use a spoon.**
- **Avoid alcohol (even beer and wine) and smoking until after your post-operative appointment.**
- **Avoid sleeping/laying down on the side of the affected area**

Try to relax and practice the best oral hygiene possible and your healing should progress well. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the office number listed below:

**217-398-4867 (Champaign Office)    217-345-4867 (Charleston Office)**