

## Gingival Graft Post-Operative Instructions

A gingival graft is a periodontal procedure to increase the amount of “attached keratinized gingiva” on a tooth. This is a firm, bound-down gum tissue that resists recession and abrasion. As Dr. Lee explained, this procedure is being done to turn the margin into strong, healthy tissue that will protect the bone and tooth for the future and not necessarily for root coverage. The tooth may still show the same amount of exposure as a result, but the gum margin will be stronger.

Avoid biting with the teeth adjacent to the grafted area for the first two or three days after the procedure. Also, avoid very hot or spicy foods and eat primarily on the back teeth.

Discomfort can normally be controlled with Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen. Please call if pain persists. Cold liquids or chipped ice are helpful in relieving any soreness.

Bleeding may occur for a few hours following the procedure, especially from the area on the roof of the mouth. Pressure with a damp tea bag for 20-30 minutes will slow down bleeding. Call the office if bleeding persists.

Ideally, the pink dressing should stay in place for a week. You can expect the stitches to dissolve in one to two weeks. You may resume brushing with a soft brush or Q-tip as comfort allows.

Often a mouth rinse will be prescribed to help reduce plaque accumulation while brushing is being avoided. The rinse is best used after breakfast and before bedtime. Try to avoid eating or drinking anything after rinsing since it will wash away the mint flavor and leave a metallic taste.

Smoking should be avoided for as long as possible. Smoking greatly reduces the blood flow to the healing area and prevents the graft from “taking”. Nicotine gum and electronic devices are also a risk.

**If you had IV sedation today:** You may feel sleepy or relaxed, avoid any activity for the rest of the day; take it easy. For your safety, avoid drinking, signing legal documents and working for the next 12-24 hours.

### Take Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen as Follows:

- 2 tabs as needed for discomfort, not to exceed four doses per day.
- 2 tabs four times a day for two days, then as need for discomfort.  
Take prescribed pain medication as needed and directed.
- 2 tabs four times a day for four days, then as needed for discomfort.  
Take prescribed pain medication as needed and directed.

Last given: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please call if you have any questions and concerns:**

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