



Instructions after Gingival/Connective Tissue Graft Surgery

What to expect following the surgery:

Bleeding: Small amounts of blood in the saliva can make your saliva appear quite red. This is normal and may be noticed throughout the rest of the day after the procedure.
Pain: Moderate discomfort may be noticed when the anesthetic first wears off and may continue for several days.
Swelling: Some swelling and discoloration of the lip and/or cheek may occur and may last for a few days.
Sensation: There may be a temporary loss of feeling in the gums in the operated area. The teeth may also feel loose for a time. The teeth may be sensitive to hot and cold temperatures.

What to do following the 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. Do NOT ICE the area. Icing the area can possibly move the graft out of place. Take two ibuprofen to help reduce any swelling every 3-4 hours to maintain comfort. Take it before the anesthesia wears off.
3. 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. You may gently rinse 24-48 hours after the surgery with warm salt water (1/2 teaspoon salt+ 8 oz. warm water). Do NOT puff out your cheeks. Tilt your head side to side and let the water fall out.
4. Avoid lifting your lip/cheek to look at the area. It is possible to accidentally tear the sutures, open the incision and delay the healing. Avoid sleeping on the side where procedure was performed for the 3 days after the surgery as it is possible that the graft could move.
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. Avoid using a waterpik.
6. Get plenty of REST. Do not exercise for the two days 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 avoid hot, spicy, acidic food, and hard foods (nuts, carrots, small seeds, etc.) Also avoid eating chewy and crisp foods.
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. Sutures will be removed at your two-week post op appointment depending on your healing. Please call if your suture is loose or breaks.
11. Do not hesitate to call **Dr. Andrew Engel** if you have any questions or concerns prior to your post-op appointment. He can be reached at **541-410-0405**.