

Northwest Periodontics and Implants

Gingival Graft Surgery Post-Operative Instructions

Medications:

- If prescribed, take antibiotics per instructions on the label and finish the entire course.
- For pain management, take up to 600 mg of Advil (ibuprofen) together with 500 mg of Tylenol Extra Strength (acetaminophen) every 4–6 hours as needed to help manage pain and swelling. We recommend continuing this regimen for the first 3 days, then gradually reducing use as healing becomes more comfortable. If you are unable to take ibuprofen or other NSAIDs, you may substitute with 1,000 mg of Tylenol (acetaminophen) every 6 hours as needed instead.

For the first 24 hours after surgery:

- Do not consume hot beverages or spicy foods.
- To help with swelling, place an ice pack over the outside cheek of the surgical site for 20 minutes every hour as often as you can. You can repeat this for up to 48 hours after surgery, then switch to a warm compress if needed to promote circulation and reduce lingering swelling.

For the first 72 hours after surgery:

- No smoking or drinking alcoholic beverages.
- No strenuous activity or exercise, this can increase swelling and discomfort.
- If you had a grafting procedure involving your palate - a protective stent was made for you. Wear the stent for the **first 72 hours to help control bleeding, only removing it to rinse the stent or brush your teeth**. After 72 hours, it is strictly for your comfort; wear as needed until your post-operative appointment. If you have a nightguard or retainer you may wear it again after 72 hours.
- Bleeding or oozing may occur from the day of surgery up to post-op. To manage excessive bleeding fold a piece of DAMP gauze or use a DAMP black tea bag and hold pressure directly over the site for a continuous 20 minutes. It's normal to repeat this process several times, but if you cannot control bleeding continue applying pressure and contact our office or your surgeon if after hours.

Until your post-operative visit:

- Expect a moderate amount of swelling and bruising.
- Do not drink through a straw.
- Do not chew on the side where surgery was performed.
- A soft food diet is recommended, strictly avoid seeds and crunchy/hard foods.
- Use the provided soft toothbrush to clean around the surgical area, avoiding the gums directly at the surgical site, twice daily for two weeks. After two weeks, gently brush the gums as well with the soft toothbrush until your post-op appointment. You can brush everywhere else as normal, but no flossing or electric toothbrush near the surgical site.

- Apply the prescribed chlorhexidine rinse generously with a Q tip at the grafted site twice daily.
- Your gum graft will change color (white/gray/pink) throughout the first 2 weeks of healing.
- Bleeding from the roof of the mouth (if tissue was taken for the graft) may occur any time leading up to your post-op appointment as new, immature blood vessels are forming and easy to disturb. If this happens, put the stent back in until bleeding has resolved.
- Sutures used can either be dissolvable or non-dissolvable. Regardless, they will be removed at your 2-4 week post operative appointment for Connective Tissue Grafts and Free Gingival Grafts. If you had an Allograft (Donor Tissue) procedure done sutures will be removed at your 8 week follow up.

EMERGENCY:

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, please call 911.

Contact our office if you experience an adverse reaction to medications we prescribed to you, bleeding you cannot control after following written instructions, signs of infection which typically occur one week after surgery and include fever, site warm to touch, oozing pus, worsening swelling or pain.

Call or text our office during normal business hours (Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

Issaquah: 425-392-8992

Redmond: 425-895-9575

If you have any after-hours questions or concerns, please contact your doctor below.

Dr. Ken Akimoto: 206-919-8421

Dr. Jeffrey Kanter: 206-930-0308

Dr. Ruby Lwo: 206-294-8430

Dr. Luciana Safioti: 425-518-9128

Dr. David Zhu: 425-301-2150



Scan this QR code for a video version of your post-op instructions!