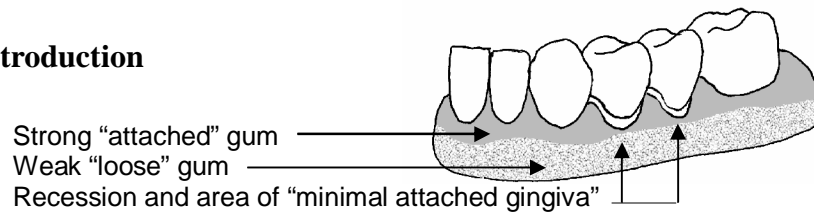


# Free Gingival Graft

## Introduction



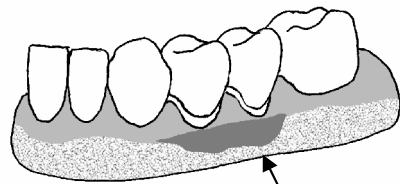
Normally a band of strong thick gum known as "attached keratinized mucosa" exists at the margin of all your teeth and the roof of your mouth (the "palate"). This gum acts to resist the forces of chewing and brushing, and provides a good barrier to prevent recession, gum pockets and tenderness. The rest of your mouth is covered by a weak thin gum known as "loose alveolar mucosa".

Reduction or loss of the strong gum (such as in areas of recession) may lead to "minimal attached gingiva" (see picture above). To prevent this area from increased risk of further recession, tenderness and gum pocketing, a "free gingival graft" procedure can be done.

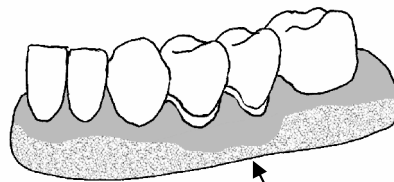
## How it's done

The gums will be numbed so that you do not feel anything. Our goal is to ensure your maximum comfort.

A small piece of gum from the palate ("donor" site) will be taken and sutured to the area with minimal attached gingiva ("recipient" site). After a few weeks of healing, the gum from both the palate and grafted site will heal. Sutures and dressing may be used to protect the graft and keep it in place.



Newly grafted gum does not cover the recession, but is placed to increase the width of thick gum.



Grafted gum, once healed, shows thicker area of attached thick mucosa. Recessions would generally stay the same.

## Before the procedure

It is important that you eat, drink and take your medications as you normally would, unless otherwise instructed by Dr. Braun. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to talk to us.

## After the procedure

Carefully following these instructions will help you understand what to expect and ensure that you heal as best as possible:

- Bleeding** – A small amount of bleeding is normal and will correct itself within 24 hours. If bleeding is significant, take a gauze or a tea bag dampened in cold water, shape it as a "U", and hold it against both sides of the teeth. Apply gentle pressure for 20 minutes and repeat as needed.
- Dressing** – A protective "clay-like" material may be placed on your teeth to cover the area, and will be removed at your next visit. Small particles may chip off or the entire dressing may come out. Unless there is discomfort, the dressing does not need to be replaced. Continue to keep the area clean.
- Swelling** – Some swelling is normal and can be minimized by using ice-packs during the first few hours. Apply to the face for 15 minutes each hour.
- Discomfort** – It is normal for the discomfort to increase for 2 to 3 days before it gets better. During this time, take Tylenol or Advil as prescribed.
- Diet** – Avoid hard, spicy foods, nuts or seeds. Do not chew on the side which was worked on, or drink hot liquids. A good diet of soft foods will make you feel better and be gentle on the area while it is healing.
- Rinsing** – Do not rinse for the first 24 hours. Afterwards, a special rinse (Chlorhexidine/Peridex) may be prescribed, to be used as directed. You can also rinse with a solution of ½ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water.
- Brushing** – Gently brush and floss any teeth not covered by dressing. In the area with the dressing, a Q-tip may be used to gently wipe the area clean.
- Other** – If any problems arise, please do not hesitate to call the office

## Maintenance

You may experience further recession and the need for more grafts in the future. To minimize this, it is important to see your hygienist regularly for cleanings, and follow our instructions on how to properly clean your teeth to minimize gingival recession.