

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURGICAL GRAFTS

Please read the following instructions carefully. Following them will make your post-operative course comfortable and help avoid any unnecessary complications.

### 1. Bleeding

- A. Slight bleeding may continue for up to 24 hours or so. This is not unusual and no cause for alarm
- B. **Do Not** rinse or swish vigorously for the first 24-48 hours. **Do Not** spit for 24 hours.
- C. **Do Not disturb** the graft site in any way for 48 hours (including brushing)
- D. If bleeding is excessive in the area of the roof of the mouth where the graft was taken, take a warm, moist tea bag and apply steady, firm pressure over the bleeding area for 30 minutes.
- E. If you are concerned about bleeding please call the office.

### 2. Discomfort

The amount of pain or discomfort varies from patient to patient. The medication given to you for pain should be used **as prescribed** and should control your discomfort. If you need to take the medication for a few days don't be alarmed, but if you cannot control the discomfort please call the office.

### 3. Oral Hygiene:

- A. Avoid brushing the surgical area, but remember that the remainder of your mouth should remain clean.
- B. **Rinse with warm salt water 3-4 times a day.** Take an 8oz glass of warm water with a 1/2 teaspoon of salt. This does not take the place of brushing and flossing the rest of your mouth. Remember for best healing the area must be plaque free.
- C. Do not use an electric brush.

### 4. Periodontal Dressing

You may have a plastic-like material, a periodontal pack, around your teeth following your surgery. It should remain in place until your next appointment when it will be removed. Occasionally small pieces of the entire dressing itself comes off. If this happens, it is not an emergency, but do call the office during regular office hours and let us

know. If you're uncomfortable without the dressing, the Doctor can replace it in a 5 minute office visit.

### 5. Plastic Stent

If we have given you a stent, we recommend wearing it for the first 24 hours to protect the roof of the mouth. After 24 hours it is for your comfort only. You may wear it as often or as little as you wish. Please note: if you eat with it, it may become stained.

### 6. Nutrition

Until the anesthetic wears off, don't eat, drink, or smoke anything. Maintaining an **adequate** diet after surgery is **essential**.

- A. You may eat foods you desire, but it is easier to favor soft foods that you can eat on the **opposite side of the mouth**, such as soup, milkshakes, pasta, soft vegetables, chicken or fish.
- B. **Avoid** hard, chewy, or spicy foods. Citric acid (orange and grapefruit juice) may sting. Foods with small seeds should be avoided.
- C. **Fluids:** Fluid intake is important. Try to take 8 glasses per day. This can help avoid slight fever following surgery.
- D. **Avoid** concentrated alcoholic beverages for the first few days. Remember you will do better if you continue to eat a balanced diet.

To maximize chances for a successful graft, try not to manipulate your mouth. Minimize your talking and do not pull your lips or cheeks to observe the surgical area. The graft may change in color (become white) during the first week. **This is normal** so don't be concerned.

Get plenty of rest and avoid strenuous activity for a few days and avoid smoking. Even if you don't have any discomfort today, we advise you to take it easy; read, watch television and relax. If you are a smoker, remember that smoke is an irritant to healing tissue and will delay your healing.

### 7. Emergencies:

If you experience any heavy bleeding or severe pain please call the office right away at **310-273-1900**. Any calls after regular office hours will be forwarded to the Doctor. Don't wait until the last moment to call; we may need to arrange for staff to accommodate you after hours. The earlier you call, the more we can help you.