

**MOST POST OPERATIVE PROBLEMS ARE BEST PREVENTED BY PROPER POST-OPERATIVE CARE. PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS.....**

### **POST GRAFT SURGERY CARE INSTRUCTIONS**

Gingival grafts are procedures that patients love to look at because they are usually in the front of the mouth. It is very important that you resist the urge to peek. Peeking pulls on the lip which can dislodge the graft. **So don't do it!!**

**Rest:** Limit your activity rest with your head elevated for the remainder of today. Treat yourself as if you have the flu.

**Bleeding:** Light bleeding is common and a little blood mixed with saliva can look like a lot of blood. Active bleeding where ropey clots develop in your mouth is not common, but can be controlled by direct pressure with a moist tea bag wrapped in gauze. Apply for 5 minutes without peeking. If bleeding persists after three repetitions call us immediately.

**Swelling:** It is common to experience some swelling following surgery. This can be minimized by the use of an ice pack applied for 15 minutes on, 15 minutes off for the first four to six hours. Should swelling persist you may use warm compresses after 24 hours.

**Smoking/Alcohol:** Smoking inhibits healing and may cause failure of the surgical therapy. Avoid excessive alcohol intake.

**Oral Hygiene:** Do not brush or floss the surgical area until you return for your 3 week post-op visit. The mouthrinse prescribed will keep the area clean and healthy.

**Eating:** Avoid foods that are spicy, sharp or hard. This can cause bleeding to begin and can loosen the dressing if one has been placed. It is also best to avoid spitting and drinking through straws. Do not rinse your mouth vigorously for the rest of the day. Fluids should be swallowed as directly as possible.

**Sleeping:** Occasionally bleeding occurs at night when the tongue breaks the scab on the palate. Follow directions for bleeding if this occurs.

**Palatal Stent:** The roof of the mouth is usually covered with a clear plastic guard. This should be left in for 24 hours, then carefully removed and cleaned. It can be worn for any duration as your comfort demands. The stent neither enhances nor slows the healing process.

**Graft site:** The graft will appear white in color the second or third day out and will remain that way for several days. It may have a flap or pouch-like appearance which is quite normal. The surgical bandage may turn black and fall off, this is normal.

**Complications & Questions:** Although we certainly do not anticipate any problems, they occasionally arise. By all means call us if you have any questions so that little complications can be treated before they become major.