



**POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS for  
Connective Tissue Grafts**

(Please read both sides of this form)

**WHEN YOU GET HOME AFTER SURGERY:**

1. Take out all gauze (if any placed—you may not need any)
2. Eat or drink something (do not use a straw for one week)
3. Replace with new gauze ONLY if oozing (1 piece, folded in quarters, moisten with a few drops of water 1 inch away from surgical area)
4. You may take a short nap

**WHEN YOU WAKE UP FROM YOUR NAP, OR 2-3 HOURS AFTER SURGERY:**

1. Take out all gauze
2. Eat or drink something again
3. Take all medications
4. Replace with new gauze if the surgery site is still bleeding

**GAUZE:** Leave gauze in place for a minimum of 60 minutes. Apply constant, firm pressure on the gauze by biting teeth together – do not chew. It is not unusual to need to replace this gauze, however, each gauze pack should be left in place with firm pressure for a minimum of 60 minutes until bleeding is controlled.

**SURGICAL AREA:** Be careful to not put pressure on or rub the tissue graft. If you were instructed to wear an appliance and uncomfortable pressure is being put on the graft, please call. You may have tissue cement placed on top of your dissolvable stitches that will fall off or peel off on its own after 7-14 days. Please allow tissue cement and stitches to come off on their own.

**BRUSHING/RINSING:** Do not brush or rinse with anything on the day of surgery. Do not brush the surgical area or two teeth surrounding it after resuming brushing. Begin with warm salt water rinses or Peridex after 24 hours. (1/4 teaspoon of salt mixed with an 8 oz. glass of warm water.) Begin brushing teeth thoroughly after meals on the first day after surgery. Brush gently around surgery site. Do NOT use a drinking straw for one week.

**FOOD:** Refer to non-chewing diet list and continue until you are released to a new diet at your follow-up visit. Take care not to bite lip or cheek while numb. Try to keep food away from the surgical site if possible.

**PAIN:** Take one of the “pain pills” which were prescribed after having eaten or having had something to drink. For moderate pain, one or two tablets of Tylenol or Ibuprofen may be taken every three to four hours. For severe pain take tablets prescribed for pain by this office, follow the instructions on the bottle.

**IMPORTANT!** Swallow tablets; do not dissolve in mouth. The prescription for pain from this office will make you a little groggy and will slow your reflexes. Do not drive an automobile or work around machinery while taking these stronger pain pills.

**NAUSEA:** Nausea and vomiting is not uncommon the day of surgery. If this becomes excessive or continues the following day, please call us.

**ANTIBIOTICS:** If an antibiotic is prescribed, it should be taken as directed on the bottle UNTIL ALL ARE TAKEN. Pain pills should only be taken when needed to relieve discomfort.

**ICE 48 HOURS:** Keep an ice bag over the outside of your jaw for the first 48 hours – 10 minutes on and 10 minutes off, while awake.

**MOIST HEAT:** After 48 hours, use warm, wet compresses on the outside of your face – 10 minutes on, 10 minutes off, while awake, for about 24 hours.

**REST:** Although strict bed rest is NOT required, excessive physical exercise, especially lifting, bending over, or straining should be avoided for the first 4 days after surgery. Sleep on 2 pillows or in a recliner to avoid additional swelling for the first 2 or 3 days after surgery.

**TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL:** It is advisable not to smoke for the remainder of the day of surgery. Smoking and alcoholic beverages should be avoided for at least one week after surgery. These may lead to irritation of the surgical site which may cause severe pain and complications.

**BLEEDING:** Following oral surgery, some bleeding or oozing is not uncommon. Usually this can be controlled by placing moist gauze over the surgical site and biting with firm pressure for a minimum of 60 minutes. At the same time, place an ice bag over the face in this area. Remain quiet, lying with head elevated on several pillows or sit upright. If bleeding cannot be brought to within normal limits, call the office.

If you have any questions regarding these instructions or other problems arise, please do not hesitate to call.

**EMERGENCY CALL (501)771-4631**