

Ridge Augmentation Bone Graft Surgery

Post-Operative Instructions

Every mouth is different. What works for a friend or family member may be inappropriate for your case. Please call us if you have questions.

Touching the surgical site: It is important that the surgical site remains untouched during the initial stages of healing. We recommend that you avoid stretching your mouth to look at the site, use caution when washing your face, and avoid playing with your tongue on the surgical sites.

Antibiotic: Your antibiotic protects the graft under your gum from infection. It is the only thing that can protect the graft. It must be taken until the bottle is empty. You can reduce stomach upset by taking it with food and/or plenty of liquid.

Combination ibuprofen & acetaminophen: Take 600mg ibuprofen and 1000mg acetaminophen (Tylenol) at the same time every 6 hours by the clock for the 1st 3 days (day of oral surgery and the next 2 days). Stop this regimen after 3 days. NOTE: Do not consume alcohol the day before or day of surgery or while you are taking acetaminophen (Tylenol) The combination acetaminophen & alcohol is hard on the liver.

Pain pills: Take one Ibuprofen pill as soon as you can after surgery. It will usually work better if taken before the numbness wears off. After that, take only as needed. Take any narcotic pain pills with food and/or plenty of liquid. Do not drive after taking any narcotic pain pill and do not take them with sleeping pills or alcohol.

Ice bag: Use a cold pack (a plastic bag of frozen peas works well) to the face over the area where the procedure was done for 10 minutes at a time, twice an hour, for the first 6 hours with GENTLE pressure. Do not try to push swelling down. This may disrupt the graft and cause it to fail or the gum to pull away. You can periodically use an ice bag the rest of the day of surgery and the next day. If you use the ice bag as directed, you should have less swelling than you would have otherwise. Less swelling equals less pain. Do not use hot packs or a hot water bottle.

Sleep: Sleep somewhat inclined for the first 2 nights after the procedure (either in a recliner chair or with your head propped up with some pillows). If you keep your head above your heart level for the first 2 days, it will significantly cut down on post-op swelling. Less swelling equals less pain.

Swelling: Most people get some swelling and, when they do, it usually happens about 48-72 hours after surgery. Using the ice bag and sleeping inclined as directed above will help a great deal with keeping it to a minimum.

Liquid in the bottle is chlorhexidine (Peridex®), a topical antiseptic. We want you to use this starting one week after oral surgery. Gently rinse like a bobble head (NO SWISHING) with 1/2

ounce (fill line on the bottle cap) for 30 seconds then spit it out. Do not eat, drink or rinse for 30 minutes after using. Use rinse 2 times a day (morning & evening). Use until the bottle is empty.

Salt-water rinses: Gently rinse your mouth out (don't swish) with warm salt water (1/2-tsp. salt in 8-ounce glass of warm water) for 30 seconds and spit out after meals

Oral hygiene: No brushing or rinsing of the surgical site is needed or wanted for the first week. You may brush the rest of your teeth but not near the surgical site. Do not floss around the tooth/teeth worked on. Doing so may accidentally take out stitches. Starting week 2 you may rinse as a bobblehead with the prescribed mouth rinse but no brushing of the surgical site. Gentle brushing with a non mechanical toothbrush near the surgical site can be started on week 4. You can brush the areas not worked on with your usual toothbrush. After week 6 you may start using a mechanical toothbrush and/or Waterpik®.

Stitches & "Barrier membrane": The stitches over the bone graft site are usually non-dissolvable and will need to be removed about 2 weeks after surgery. The barrier membrane or "bandaid" is either dissolvable or non-dissolvable. Your dentist will inform you on what was placed. A non-dissolvable barrier membrane needs to be removed at 4-5 weeks after surgery.

Bleeding: "Pink" saliva is normal for a few days. Minor bleeding mixed with saliva looks much worse than the actual amount of bleeding. You may have some spotting on your pillow. It is recommended to sleep with a towel over your pillow. If the bleeding just won't stop, please call.

Food: Stay on a soft diet, chew away from the surgery area and avoid any foods that would be more likely to traumatize the surgery site, such as corn, popcorn, nuts, and seeds (fruits like strawberries have seeds). Do this for up to 3 weeks. Citric juices, carbonated beverages or acidic foods, like tomatoes, may make it hurt, but won't damage the healing. For the first 7 days avoid really hot foods or drinks. Nutritional food supplements (Carnation Instant Breakfast drink, Ensure, Slim-Fast, etc.) are advisable as a meal supplement since they are smooth and liquid. Ensure makes a product called Glucerna for diabetics. After 3 weeks, there should be no eating restrictions. No straws for the first 2 weeks. No milkshakes with a straw for 3 weeks.

Exercise: Avoid exercise for the first 7 days. Bending over to tie shoelaces, gardening, or lifting small children can cause significant damage and pain to the surgical site. Strenuous physical activity may increase post-operative pain or cause post-operative bleeding and swelling. Less activity equals less pain.

Smoking: Don't do it.

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