

SOFT TISSUE SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

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To ensure rapid healing and to avoid complications, please follow these instructions carefully. Diligent post-operative care is critical for successful treatment results. Bleeding, swelling, and varying degrees of pain/discomfort should be expected following periodontal surgery.

Pain and Swelling

- **IMPORTANT: DO NOT TUG/PULL ON YOUR CHEEK OR LIP FOLLOWING GINGIVAL GRAFT PROCEDURES!!!**
 - This movement can cause the graft to fail
- Expect swelling, discomfort, sensitivity, and possible bruising. Swelling should begin to decrease after 3-5 days
- No strenuous physical activity or heavy lifting for 2-3 days
- Keep your head slightly elevated for the first 1-2 days to minimize bleeding and swelling
- **Palatal Dressing** – for certain procedures, a dressing is applied to the palate to provide comfort during healing.
 - It typically falls out after one week and the area may be quite tender for several days. You may experience slight bleeding when this happens
 - Salt water rinses are soothing to the area (1/2 tsp salt in a warm glass of water)

Medications

- **TAKE MEDICATIONS AS PRESCRIBED**
- **Norco/Percocet cause drowsiness and impair decision making – DO NOT DRIVE, OPERATE MACHINERY, etc.**
- Alternate ibuprofen and acetaminophen (Tylenol) **OR** ibuprofen and Norco/Percocet (if prescribed) unless instructed otherwise by your physician or Dr. Wanat
- **Maximum Doses:**
 - **Ibuprofen:** Do not exceed 3200 mg in a 24 hour period
 - **Acetaminophen (Tylenol):** Do not exceed 3000 mg in a 24 hour period
- **Important:** Norco and Percocet contain 325mg acetaminophen (Tylenol) per tab

Bleeding

- Slight bleeding or oozing normally persists for the first 24-48 hours
- If bleeding seems excessive, apply gentle pressure with moist gauze for 30-45 minutes and keep head elevated.
- Avoid using straws, vigorous swishing, spitting, etc.

Diet

- Staying hydrated along with a nutritious, high protein diet is important for healing well
- Liquid/soft food diet is recommended for 2 weeks.
- Avoid chewing, especially on the side of surgery
- Avoid hard, fibrous, seedy, acidic, spicy, or “sharp” foods
- Avoid hot, carbonated and caffeinated liquids for first 2-3 days
- Avoid alcohol for first 3 days or while taking medications

Sutures

- Some sutures dissolve in approximately 1-2 weeks
- **PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE YOUR OWN SUTURES.** Sutures that do not dissolve must be kept in place until your surgeon determines healing is adequate for suture removal

Oral Hygiene

- GENTLY rinse with prescribed mouthwash or warm salt water
- Do not brush or floss the surgical site until instructed otherwise. Continue to brush and floss the rest of your teeth as usual
- Avoid spitting – allow mouthwash or toothpaste to fall out of your mouth
- **DO NOT USE Waterpik, AirFloss, etc., at surgical site!**

Smoking

- Do not smoke for at least 14 days after the surgery, if at all. Smoking delays healing and increases risk of infection/complications

Contact our office if...

- Pain or swelling continues to increase after ~5 days
- You have a fever or chills, increased swelling, signs of infection
- Bleeding seems excessive. Go to the emergency department if bleeding cannot be controlled