

Post-op Instructions – Connective Tissue Grafting

What to expect following surgery:

- **Bleeding:** Small amounts of blood in the saliva can make your saliva appear quite red. This is normal and may be noticed the rest of the day after the procedure.
- **Pain:** Moderate discomfort may be noticed after the anesthetic wears off, and may continue for several days. An anti-inflammatory and/or pain medication will be prescribed, please take as directed.
- **Swelling:** Some swelling and discoloration of the gums and/or palate may occur and may last for several days. Please do not pull at the lip or gums to look at the surgical site.
- **Sensation:** There may be a temporary loss of feeling at the graft and/or donor sites. The teeth may also be temporarily sensitive to hot and cold temperatures.

What to do following the surgery:

- After leaving the office, rest and avoid strenuous activities for the remainder of the day. Keeping blood pressure lower for the first 3-4 days will reduce bleeding and aid healing.
- **Take all of your antibiotic prescription as directed until they are gone.** Take Tylenol, Advil, or prescription pain reliever as directed by your doctor to maintain comfort. Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery when taking pain prescriptions. Do not drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medications.
- Applying an ice pack to the face over the surgery site will minimize swelling. Apply for 20 minutes, then remove for 20 minutes. Continue this for the first day only.
- Eat soft foods for the first 2 - 4 days. Maintain a good, balanced diet. **Do not drink through a straw.** Drink plenty of water. Avoid alcohol for 48 hours.
- **Avoid chewing or biting directly on the graft area until your post-operative appointment.**
- Brush your teeth regularly, **avoiding the graft area completely until your first post-op appointment.** Take care to avoid pulling the sutures.
- Do not rinse vigorously & do not use a Waterpik or electric toothbrush.
- Avoid lifting the lip with your fingers to look at the area. It is possible to accidentally tear the sutures, open the incision, and delay healing.
- Smoking should be stopped following surgery. Healing and success of the surgery will be substantially reduced by the cigarette smoke chemicals in your body.
- Women: some antibiotics can reduce the effectiveness of birth control pills. Use alternate birth control methods for two months.