Home Care Instructions Following Gum Graft Surgery

DO

✓ Rest for the remainder of the surgery day – feet up watching TV!!
✓ Take your medication as prescribed
✓ Drink plenty of liquids
✓ Avoid using straws
✓ Eat soft foods (protein shakes, ice cream, Ensure, yogurt etc.)
✓ Keep splint on for first 24 hours
✓ Use splint when eating for first 3-5 days

DO NOT

✗ Brush the surgical sight for 2 weeks and only brush gently for the next 4 weeks
✗ Floss the surgical sight for 6 weeks
✗ Play with the dressing or sutures with your tongue or hand
✗ Look at or “show off” the treated area until after your sutures have been removed
✗ Rinse your mouth for 24 hours following surgery
✗ Eat hot and spicy foods, peanuts, popcorn, chewing gum, and chips for 2 weeks
✗ Chew hard solid foods for 1 week
✗ Drink hot liquids for 1 week
✗ Drink through a straw for 1 week
✗ Rinse your mouth excessively
✗ Smoke
✗ Exercise – proper wound healing requires rest. Don’t do any strenuous exercise that will get your blood pumping for 7 days
✗ take aspirin
✗ Plan out of country travel for one month
Swelling
Swelling on the first day may occur and can be kept to a minimum with ice packs to the outside of the face over the surgical area. Ice packs should be used 10 minutes on, 10 minutes off, during the first 12 hours. If swelling continues into the second day, then begin to apply moist heat to the surgical area. Do not use ice packs after the day of surgery.

Bleeding
A slight amount of bleeding is expected the first day. If bleeding is excessive, apply direct pressure with moist gauze over the site of bleeding for 15 minutes. If you do not have gauze, a tea bag works well. If this does not control the bleeding, please call.

Sutures
The sutures that have been placed are resorbable. They will resorb gradually and any remnants will be removed at your 10-14 day post surgical assessment appointment.

Healing splint
You will be given a healing splint (mouthguard) to wear on your palate for 3-5 days. This will aid healing and help with discomfort during eating. The soft plastic material will absorb stain, especially from tomato sauce or boxed chicken noodle soup. You may want to avoid these foods while wearing your splint.
You might be given a healing splint that is not removable. We will insert it after your surgery and it is to remain in place until we remove it for you in approximately 2 weeks. If it does come out before your removal appointment we ask you to the use the removable splint (that you have also been given) until your surgical site is comfortable.

Roof of Mouth Donor Site Healing
The area on the roof of your mouth that the graft tissue is obtained from often forms a depression/divot during healing. This area always fills in and returns to normal. Occasionally altered sensation (when the healed donor site is touched) is experienced after complete healing. Patients however say that this is never a concern that they are consciously aware of.

Chlorhexidine & Salt Water Rinses for Days & Weeks Following Surgery
Do not rinse for the rest of the day following surgery. The day after surgery start gently rinsing with chlorhexidine (approximately 5ccs twice a day for 60 seconds) for seven days. After seven days you can switch to dabbing the surgical area twice a day for an additional week with a Q-tip dipped in chlorhexidine. It is also helpful to start rinsing the day after your surgery with a gentle salt water rinse (1/2 a teaspoon of salt mixed into a glass of warm water) twice a day for two weeks. Please be aware that the chlorhexidine rinse can occasionally stain your teeth. Should this happen we are happy to polish it off for no charge and we usually watch for this at your follow up appointments.

Note: Over the next 6-12 months at your regular maintenance appointments Dr. Salaberry will monitor the healing of your surgery. Pending the results of your healing, Dr. Salaberry may suggest minor modifications to further enhance the success of your treatment.

If you have any concerns during the healing stages of your treatment phone

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If Dr. Salaberry cannot be reached, please call
Dr. Pada 250-763-7858, Dr. Leitch H: 250-764-2510 or Dr. Wiens 250-808-5559
If they cannot be reached, please call the Dentist on Call 250-861-6606
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