

Reuss and Reuss Dental

Post Operative Instructions: Connective Tissue Graft

You just had a connective tissue graft, which is periodontal SURGERY. An alloderm tissue graft was placed under your gum tissue and over your teeth and has been sutured in place. You can promote faster healing and avoid complications, by simply following these instructions.

Day of Surgery:

Healing: After a connective tissue graft, the blood will begin to clot and the graft material will begin to stabilize. This is an important part of the normal healing process. The first 72 hours are the most critical since the tissue is still very immature. During this time, the only thing holding the graft in place is the sutures. You should therefore avoid activities that might disturb the surgical area. Do not smoke, rinse your mouth vigorously or apply pressure to the area with any objects; including your tongue and fingers. Do not lift or pull your lip back to look at the area- this can actually cause damage to the tissue and tear the sutures. Remember, it is imperative that the sutures remain in place for the recommended time. If they come out too soon, the soft tissue graft may not heal properly or may be lost.

Bleeding: Some slight seepage of blood is expected; however, you should not experience extensive bleeding. If such bleeding does occur, apply firm pressure with a moist gauze for 20 minutes. If bleeding does not subside, please call our office.

Swelling/Bruising: Slight bruising or swelling of your gums and sometimes face, is normal. You may minimize swelling by applying a cold compress or ice pack to your face or cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off for the rest of the day. Do not lay flat for the first 24 hours. Laying in a recliner is a good position. If you lay in bed, be sure to have one or two extra pillows under your head to keep it elevated.

If you experience swelling accompanied by fever, a bad odor, or pain that intensifies and is not relieved by pain medications, please call our office.

Pain: You may be prescribed a medication to control discomfort and you should take your first pill before the anesthetic has worn off. If prescribed a pain medication, take as instructed on the label. Do not exceed the recommended dosage. Avoid driving or operating heavy machinery when taking prescription pain medications. Do not drink alcohol while taking prescription pain medications. If prescription pain medication is not needed, you may substitute for over-the-counter pain medication; such as: Ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil or whatever non-aspirin pain reliever you would use for a headache.

Antibiotic: If prescribed, be sure to take an antibiotic as directed to help treat or prevent infection.

Nausea: This is most often caused by taking pain medications on an empty stomach. Reduce nausea by preceding each pill with a small amount of soft food, then taking the pill with a large amount of water. Staying in a reclined position also seems to settle the stomach.

Numbness: The local anesthetic will cause you to be numb for several hours after you leave the office. Be very careful not to bite, chew, pinch, or scratch the numb area.

Smoking: Smoking should be stopped following the surgery. Healing will be substantially reduced by the cigarette smoke chemicals in your body and the action of smoking may cause a dry socket.

Brushing: Do not brush your teeth for the first 8 hours following the surgery. After this, you may brush and floss your teeth gently, avoiding the area of the surgery. Do not brush the area where the graft was placed until we evaluate the healing at your first follow-up appointment. Do not spit forcefully after brushing your teeth, instead open your mouth and let your saliva and toothpaste fall out.

Rinsing: Do not rinse or swish at all for the first 24-48 hours after your procedure. After this, you may begin to rinse gently by placing salt water or prescribed mouth rinse in your mouth and gently rotating your head side to side. Over the counter mouth rinses and mouthwashes should be avoided during this early period.

Diet: For the first week, you should maintain a diet of soft foods, such as Jell-O, pudding, yogurt, cream of wheat, mashed potatoes, clear soups, eggs, etc. Food that crumbles, such as potato chips, popcorn, crackers, cookies, etc. should be avoided. Very hot foods should also be avoided to prevent burns of the extraction site. Try to keep food on the opposite side of your mouth to avoid the surgery site. Return to normal diet when advised.

Activity: Rest quietly with your head elevated for the remainder of the day. Keep physical activities to a minimum for the first 24-48 hours following your surgery. Healing will occur much faster with rest! Increased activity can lead to increased bleeding. Do not bend over or lift heavy objects for 2-3 days.

Jaw Joint Pain: Your jaw may be sore from holding your mouth open during surgery. Massage jaw muscles gently and eat soft foods. Do not over extend opening your mouth, as it can further aggravate this area.

Follow-Up Appointment

You will need to return to the office within the first 4-7 days to have sutures removed or just for a brief follow-up healing check. At this time, you may be advised to use an antibiotic mouth rinse. Depending on your healing, you may need to return for 1 or more follow-up appointments to check healing and/or the removal of sutures. Please do not remove your own sutures.

If you have any further questions or problems please call:

530-365-4581

drreuss.com