

GINGIVAL GRAFT SURGERY

Purpose: The purpose of a gingival (gum) graft is to increase or fortify the zone of dense gum tissue around one or more teeth. This procedure is NOT designed to cover exposed root surfaces where recession has already occurred.

Procedure: This is an in-office procedure. There should be little or no pain during the appointment. The area is anesthetized with local anesthetic and or I.V. sedation. A section of native tissue will be repositioned over the area where the gum tissue is inadequate and stitched into place. The stitches will dissolve after approximately 2 weeks. A smoothing appointment may be needed; this will be determined 6 to 8 weeks after surgery. This appointment is done to make sure the new gum tissue blends well with your existing tissue.

Pre-Operative Instructions:

1. Eat a normal meal prior to the procedure. If you're having I.V. sedation please refer to sedation handout for eating instructions.
2. You will be given prescriptions; *normally* an anti-inflammatory and chlorhexidine gluconate rinse. Take as directed on the "Pre-Operative Instructions..." handout.

Post-Operative Instructions

1. Go home, lie down and keep head slightly elevated. Establish that bleeding is controlled, and medications are working. Avoid strenuous activity for the first 48 hours.
2. Expect some swelling this is normal, use an ice pack (provided in post-operative kit) over the surgical area for the remaining portion of the day.
3. After procedure avoid crunchy, hard food for the first 48 hours. When back on a normal diet chew specifically on the other side, if surgery occurred on both sides maintain soft diet for first 2 weeks. Eat well and drink fluids, If you get hypoglycemic or dehydrated you will feel poorly. Even if you do not feel hungry or thirsty, eat and drink anyway. Use of a straw is not recommended for the first 48 hours. This creates negative pressure on the inside of the mouth and can precipitate bleeding. It is advisable not to vigorously rinse spit or swish during this time period. If you wish to rinse put fluid in your mouth and hold in place, turn head from side to side over the sink open your mouth and allow the fluid to drop out. A little pink or redness in the normal volume of saliva is within normal limits.
4. Expect some oozing from the surgical area for the first 48 hours. If any significant bleeding begins (bright red in color greater than normal volume of saliva) which does not stop with gentle pressure, apply a moistened tea bag (not herbal) that has been thinly coated with Vaseline. Put pressure on the bleeding site for approximately twenty minutes. This should stop the bleeding. If this is unsuccessful, call the office for assistance. This means anytime...day or night!
5. Avoid brushing surgical site for at least one week. Gently swab surgical area twice daily with chlorhexidine gluconate rinse (prescription provided).

NOTE: The quality of the healed result and how long it lasts directly depends on your commitment to daily oral hygiene and continuing care maintenance. It is our goal to never need further intervention.

If you have any questions regarding your hygiene or any change in technique following the surgery, please feel free to ask.

Remember, you may contact Dr. Wilde at 360-692-0300 or 360-620-2492 at any time if you are having a problem. It is important for you to know that you are not alone and that we are always available to help, reassure or answer any questions.