

## **HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS** **FOR CONNECTIVE TISSUE AND GINGIVAL GRAFTS**

**NOTE:** Avoid taking aspirin for at least 5-8 days prior to surgery to prevent excessive bleeding or as instructed by your physician.

### **NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY**

1. Eat normally.
2. Minimize the use of alcoholic beverages.
3. Get a good night's rest.

### **DAY OF SURGERY**

1. Eat a normal breakfast or lunch but avoid **excessive** intake of coffee, tea, or other caffeinated beverages.
2. Wear comfortable clothes with short sleeves, as we will need to take your blood pressure. We will provide blankets as needed.
3. Arrange for someone to drive you to your appointment and home after the surgery if you have opted for IV or Oral sedation. **IF** you are being sedated, please refrain from eating for 6 hours prior to your procedure.

**With IV or oral sedation you should avoid driving and making important decisions for 24 hours.**

### **AFTER YOUR SURGERY**

1. We will want you to go directly home and rest for the remainder of the day. Lie quietly with your head elevated and limit your physical activity. Sleep at a slight incline for at least the first 48 hours.
2. Generally, very little swelling will occur. You may, however, apply an ice pack beneath the area where the graft is placed for 20 minutes on and 10 minutes off for the first 24 hours following surgery.
3. You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Please use this as directed to control pain. This may make you drowsy. Please refrain from driving while taking these.
4. Avoid any strenuous activities such as heavy lifting, cycling or running for approximately 7-10 days following surgery. You may engage in other activities according to your level of comfort.
5. Bruising is always a possibility after dental surgeries. It is possible to begin bruising in the area 3-5 after your surgery. It does go away and is short term. You may or may not experience bruising.
6. You will have sutures on the graft and the donor site. All of these sutures are dissolvable and will fall out on their own, typically anywhere from 3-10 days after surgery.

### **DRESSING**

1. A periodontal dressing (oral bandage) may have been placed over the grafted area to protect it during the early phases of healing. This dressing can be light pink in color. This dressing may tend to loosen or fall off as the week progresses. This will not affect the healing of the graft; however, if this results in increased discomfort or excessive bleeding, please call the office.
2. A removable plastic stent is sometimes used to cover the donor site (area where the graft was removed) to help form a stable clot and provide more comfort. This can be used until the donor site feels comfortable without it. Please wear this continuously for the first 24 hours after surgery, and then while eating and for comfort for the first week.
3. On your palatal donor site there are dissolvable sutures along with some tissue adhesive. This will feel rough to your tongue but as the sutures dissolve the adhesive will fall off. Once the adhesive falls off, your palate may be more tender.

## **BLEEDING PROBLEMS**

1. Some slight bleeding can be expected for several hours following surgery. Try to avoid swallowing blood by rinsing as needed with plain room temperature water.
2. If excessive bleeding occurs, it will probably come from the donor site on the roof of the mouth. You may insert your stent, or apply firm pressure with a tea bag or moist gauze to control this. If the bleeding is excessive or does not stop, please call our office.

## **DIET**

1. For the first day, stay primarily on liquids. Milk shakes, fruit juices, yogurt, ice cream and puddings are all acceptable. Avoid hot, spicy or acidic products.
2. For the remainder of the week, it is important that you maintain an adequate diet rich in protein. Refer to the enclosed list for soft diet suggestions.

## **HOME CARE**

It is important that you continue with your normal oral hygiene on the non-surgical areas after surgery. Please do not brush or floss the area of the graft following surgery until you have been instructed to do so. Typical healing time after surgery is approximately 5-6 weeks and complications may arise from brushing/flossing this area during that time. At your follow-up appointments, we will instruct you on proper timing and techniques for home care of the surgical site. No straw use for a *minimum* of 2 weeks.

DO NOT pull your lip or cheek away to look at the surgical site, the grafts are extremely delicate for the first two weeks.

We have prescribed an oral rinse, Peridex, for you to use during that time. This will keep the area clean without compromising the surgical site. Use this twice a day beginning the morning after surgery. Peridex may leave a film on your teeth and tongue that can be removed at your regular maintenance appointment. This may be more noticeable with heavy coffee, tea or wine use, and smoking. You will continue use of Peridex throughout the entire healing process. If you are taking penicillin or tetracycline, an additional birth control measure is recommended while taking the antibiotic, as it may inactivate your birth control pills.

## **PAIN**

You have been prescribed narcotic pain medication. You may use this as directed every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. You may replace this with Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 500 mg and Ibuprofen 400 mg every 6 hours if you do not wish to take a narcotic. Remember to be proactive with your pain medication, managing your pain in a timely manner to avoid your pain becoming intolerable. Please call the office if you have any questions or need a refill of your pain medication. Narcotics can cause constipation, please read any drug information given to you by the pharmacist.

There may be variations to your healing and care following surgery. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

If you have any questions please contact the office  
Rocky Mountain Periodontal Specialists, L.L.C.  
685 Citadel Drive East Ste. 200  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80909  
(719) 574-4867

## POST EXTRACTION INSTRUCTIONS

1. You can reduce swelling by applying ice to the affected area, 20 minutes on then 10 minutes off, for the first 6-8 hours. Keep your head elevated; avoid bending over and strenuous exercise for the first 48 hours. Bruising is always a possibility after dental surgeries. It is possible to begin bruising in the area 3-5 after your surgery. It does go away and is short term. You may or may not experience bruising.
2. Please refrain from swishing, spitting, smoking or the use of a straw for the next 24 hours. These activities could loosen any clot formation.
3. You should begin with cool liquids and soft diet as soon as you feel comfortable doing so. Please use non-chew foods the first day and you may gradually increase your diet as tolerated.
4. Bite on gauze for approximately one hour. If the bleeding persists beyond that time, replace the gauze and bite firmly for an additional hour. (Slight bleeding is not uncommon for the first 24 hours.)
5. Avoid any strenuous activities such as heavy lifting, cycling or running for approximately 7-10 days following surgery. You may engage in other activities according to your level of comfort.
6. Use your normal oral hygiene techniques beginning the day following surgery in the non-surgical areas. Please do not brush/floss the surgical area until instructed otherwise, usually at your first follow-up appointment. You have been given a prescription for an oral rinse, Peridex, to use beginning the day after surgery. We will have you continue this until you are instructed otherwise. Peridex rinse can sometimes leave a film on your teeth and tongue with continued use. Please be aware that this film is not permanent. This film may be worse if you drink coffee or tea, red wine, or if you smoke and can be removed at your regular maintenance appointment after surgery.
7. You have been prescribed narcotic pain medication. You may use this as directed every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. You may replace this with Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 500 mg and Ibuprofen 400 mg every 6 hours if you do not wish to take a narcotic. Remember to be proactive with your pain medication, managing your pain in a timely manner to avoid your pain becoming intolerable. Please call the office if you have any questions or need a refill of your pain medication. Narcotics can cause constipation, please read any drug information given to you by the pharmacist.
8. If you are taking penicillin or tetracycline, an additional birth control measure is recommended while taking the antibiotic, as it may inactivate your birth control pills.

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# Home Care Instructions Following Periodontal Surgery

**NOTE:** Avoid taking aspirin for 3-7 days prior to or following surgery to prevent excessive bleeding. If your doctor has prescribed aspirin, we will need to make special arrangements to prepare for your treatment.

## **NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY:**

- \* Eat normally.
- \* Minimize the use of alcoholic beverages.
- \* Get a good night's rest.

## **DAY OF SURGERY:**

- \* Eat a normal breakfast or lunch and remember to keep hydrated with water.
- \* Wear comfortable clothing with short sleeves for blood pressure monitoring. We will provide blankets.
- \* You will need to arrange for someone to drive you to and from your surgery if you are having IV or oral sedation

## **AFTER YOUR SURGERY:**

- We will want you to go directly home and rest for the remainder of the day. Remember to keep your head elevated and limit your physical activity.
- Apply an ice pack to your face in the area of surgery for 20 minutes, and then remove it for ten minutes. Repeat this cycle for the first 24 hours following surgery (except when sleeping) to increase your comfort and minimize swelling. After the first 24 hours use moist heat to help to dilate the blood vessels and allow swelling to drain, as well as for comfort.
- You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Use as prescribed to control pain. **\*\*NOTE\*\*:** Please do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or make any important decisions while on prescription pain medication or for 24 hours following IV or oral sedation. **Narcotics can cause constipation, please read any drug information given to you by the pharmacist.**
- Some slight bleeding can be expected the day of the surgery. If the flow of blood is greater than minor oozing, call our office immediately. Following sinus surgeries, you may expect small amounts of nasal drainage including clotted blood.
- You may have something cold to drink or soft to eat as soon as you feel ready. Make sure that you eat or drink some milk prior to taking pain medications as these can upset an empty stomach. Remember to drink plenty of fluids.
- With IV or oral sedation you should avoid driving and making important decisions for 24 hours.

## **HOME CARE:**

Use your normal oral hygiene techniques beginning the day following surgery in the non-surgical areas. Please do not brush/floss the surgical area until instructed otherwise, usually at your first follow-up appointment. You have been given a prescription for an oral rinse, Peridex, to use beginning the day after surgery. We will have you continue this until you are instructed to resume normal brushing and flossing.

For scaling and root planing procedures, you may begin brushing and flossing normally the morning after your surgery.

Peridex rinse can sometimes leave a film on your teeth and tongue with continued use. Please be aware that this film, which presents mostly between the teeth and on the tongue, is not permanent. This film may be worse if you drink coffee or tea, red wine, or if you smoke and can be removed at your regular maintenance appointment after surgery.

#### **REMAINDER OF THE WEEK FOLLOWING SURGERY:**

- **Pain:** You have been prescribed narcotic pain medication. You may use this as directed every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. You may replace this with Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 500 mg and Ibuprofen 400 mg every 6 hours if you do not wish to take a narcotic. Remember to be proactive with your pain medication, managing your pain in a timely manner to avoid your pain becoming intolerable. Please call the office if you have any questions or need a refill of your pain medication. Narcotics can cause constipation, please read any drug information given to you by the pharmacist.
- **Diet:** It is important that you maintain an adequate diet, rich in protein, and that you resume normal eating as soon as possible after surgery. Included in your information packet is a list of suggestions for immediately after surgery or if you are having a difficult time chewing regular foods. Avoid vigorous chewing of hard, tough, spicy or acidic foods in the first several days after surgery. Extreme hot or cold temperatures may be uncomfortable. Vitamin intake will help with healing, (vitamin C 2,000 mg, E 800u, multi-B complex, etc.).
- **Swelling:** The first day following surgery, you might be aware of swelling to your face. This may increase until the 5<sup>th</sup> day following surgery and then gradually subside. This pattern of swelling is associated with normal healing. If you notice an increase in swelling anytime after the 5<sup>th</sup> day, please call our office immediately. Moist heat can help reduce swelling and increase comfort. In addition to swelling, some patients experience bruising as well. It is possible to begin bruising in the area 3-5 after your surgery. It does go away and is short term. You may or may not experience bruising.
- **Activity:** Avoid any strenuous activities such as heavy lifting, cycling or running for approximately 7-10 days following surgery. You may engage in other activities according to your level of comfort.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

- Try to avoid the surgical area as much as possible. Chew on the other side of your mouth until instructed otherwise. Please avoid playing with the area with your tongue.
- Avoid flying for at least one week following your surgery.
- Depending on your procedure sutures may need to stay in for up to 2 weeks. If stitches around the gum should become loose, do not attempt to remove them yourself. Call the office
- We will have you return for follow-up 1-4 weeks after your surgery to ensure that healing is progressing normally with further follow-up depending on your healing.
- There is much variation in one's reaction to this type of surgery and to the medication. It is important for you to realize that the symptoms described and discomfort which you might encounter are all part of the process of healing. It is also important to realize that you are not alone. If you have any questions please feel free to call our office.
- There is a possibility that you will have a *barricade* or a *post-surgical bandage* placed on the surgical site. It can be pink or whiteish and can possibly fall off prior to your post-op appointment. Do not worry, it will be removed at your post-op check if it is still in place.
- If you are taking penicillin or tetracycline, an additional birth control measure is recommended while taking the antibiotic, as it may inactivate your birth control pills.

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## SOFT DIET

### SUGGESTED FOODS AFTER DENTAL SURGERY

(Remember to maintain a well-balanced diet)

**IF YOU ARE BEING SEDATED: SIX (6) HOURS PRIOR TO SURGERY DO NOT EAT ANY SOLID FOODS. YOU MAY DRINK CLEAR LIQUIDS FOR HYDRATION. PLEASE EMPTY BLADDER PRIOR TO SURGERY.**

#### MILK, CHEESE, EGGS:

- Whole or skim milk, buttermilk, eggnog, yogurt.
- Ice cream without nuts or other hard pieces.
- Nutriment i.e. Ensure, Sustacal
- Eggs: soft boiled, poached or scrambled.
- Custards, puddings.
- Cottage cheese, blue cheese or any soft cheese (Brie).

#### MEAT AND FISH:

- Any fish which is soft.
- Liver, pate, meatloaf
- Veal, beef, chicken: must be finely cut or chopped.

#### CEREALS:

- It is suggested you do not eat bread for three days after surgery, as bread has a tendency to stick to the dressing and pull on the sutures (stitches).
- Cooked cereals: especially Cream of Rice or Wheat; Rice Krispies or Puffed Rice or Wheat with plenty of milk, oatmeal.

#### VEGETABLES AND FRUITS:

- Clear soups, strained cream soups, such as asparagus, peas, tomato, etc.
- Mashed potatoes, squash, creamed or strained vegetables.
- Juice, Applesauce, bananas, avocado, canned fruits without seeds.
- Meat or vegetable casseroles.
- Noodles.

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

- Jell-O, Jellies, honey, apple butter, Plain cakes or soft cookies
- Salad dressings that do not have seeds or hard pieces of spices or vegetables in them.
- BABY FOODS – last resort, but don't laugh – they work!
- **Avoid** anything with seeds, nuts or chocolate bits, rice.
- **Avoid** apples, carrots or anything hard you have to bite into.
- **Avoid** chips or anything that can poke or puncture your surgical site.
- **Avoid** breads for the first three days **or** for two weeks if you have had a tissue graft.
- **Avoid** drinking through a straw for all surgeries for a minimum of ONE WEEK until cleared & ***especially*** if you have had an extraction.
- **Avoid popcorn and chewing gum please!**

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