



## Post-Operative Care After Gingival Graft Surgery

For the first 24 hours after a surgical procedure, the body assumes there's been an "injury," and the natural response by the body is swelling. This is a predictable inflammatory response, which is actually the first step toward healing. These Post-Op instructions are designed to set up an environment of minimal swelling. If a gingival pouch procedure was performed, it is a "closed" site, and it is more subject to post-operative swelling. It is very important that these Post-Operative instructions are followed.

### CARE OF THE MOUTH

Brushing and Flossing: Begin brushing and flossing the areas not operated on, the day following surgery. AVOID THE SURGICAL SITE(S) until given specific brushing instructions at your post-operative visit. You may notice a white film over the surgical site. This is completely normal.

At your surgical visit, you received a bottle of gel. Its use will promote healing.

DIRECTIONS: During the first week after surgery, apply two drops of the gel to the surgical site every 3 hours during waking hours. After the first week, apply the same amount 3 times per day to the site, until your first post-operative appointment. Avoid eating or drinking for 30 minutes after application of the gel.

Electric Toothbrushes and Water Pik: DO NOT use any electric toothbrush (such as Sonicare or Oral-B Braun) or a Water Pik for 8 weeks following your surgery.

## EATING

First 24 Hours: Adequate nutrition is essential for normal healing. Following surgery, your diet should be restricted to cold liquids. Yogurt, smoothies, milkshakes and dietary supplements such as Carnation Instant Breakfast or Ensure are good choices. AVOID PEROXIDE, ALCOHOL (INCLUDING MOUTHWASH), CARBONATED BEVERAGES, AND DRINKING THROUGH A STRAW.

After 24 Hours: You may have soft foods that are easily chewed, such as cooked vegetables, fish, pasta and meatloaf. You should use utensils when eating, and avoid chewing at the surgical site for 2 weeks. DO NOT SKIP MEALS. If you take nourishment regularly, you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort, and heal faster.

## ACTIVITIES

Rest: Plan to rest at home the remainder of the day of surgery and the following day. You may read, watch TV or work at your desk at home. When sleeping, elevate your head to decrease swelling.

Afterward: You may return to your normal daily routine, but avoid strenuous activities, such as heavy lifting or exercise programs which elevate your heart rate, for 1 week after surgery.

Please call our office at (504) 347-6000, if you have any questions or problems.