

## INSTRUCTIONS TO OUR PATIENTS FOLLOWING SOFT TISSUE GRAFTING

**DISCOMFORT:** Following soft tissue grafts, a certain amount of discomfort can be expected. To minimize discomfort in the surgical area, take the prescribed medication or your usual pain reliever. You should not drive a car or operate dangerous equipment while taking the stronger narcotic pain medication prescribed.

### MEDICATIONS:

- Take the Ibuprofen for at least 1-2 days. **Discontinue as soon as possible.**
- Take the narcotic or stronger medication only as needed for additional discomfort. The narcotic medication can be taken in addition to the Ibuprofen medication.
- **IMPORTANT: DO NOT** discontinue the Ibuprofen medication while taking narcotic medication. It is safe to take the 2 medications together.

**MOUTH CARE:** Starting the day after the procedure, frequent rinsing of the mouth (3-5 times a day) with warm salt water is recommended. On the day following the surgery routine, oral hygiene should also be started in all areas except those on or near the surgical dressing. You may carefully and gently brush the dressing. Smoking will delay the normal healing phase and increase the risk of bleeding. You should refrain from hot fluids the first 24 hours. Do not use a straw or expectorate the first day.

**DRESSING:** The material which may have been placed over the area(s) of the graft(s) is primarily for your comfort. It will take 2 hours to harden. Although the dressing should remain in place until your next appointment, it is not necessary to replace if it should come off. Do not be concerned if small bits and pieces chip off.

**STENT:** You may or may not have this appliance to cover your palate during the healing phase. If you do, you can wear it all the time, especially to eat and sleep. You should take it out and clean it following meals. Starting the day after surgery you should take it out when you rinse with warm salt water. Always leave the stent in at night during sleep if possible. Do not hesitate to trim any uncomfortable areas with scissors.

**BLEEDING:** A slight amount of bleeding should not be alarming. However, if the bleeding is excessive or continues over a long period of time, rinse with ice cold water. Remove any clots that may be present, and then apply firm pressure with a moistened gauze pad for 15 minutes by the clock. Repeat if necessary. If you are unable to control bleeding with the gauze, use a moistened tea bag for 15 minutes. Repeat 3 or 4 times if necessary.

**DIET/EATING:** You may eat any food you desire, however avoid hot foods the first day to help prevent bleeding problems. A diet of softer consistency would be advised until chewing becomes more comfortable. Remember a proper diet is essential for healing and is helpful to prevent nausea from the pain medication.

**POST-OP VISIT:** Usually your first post-operative appointment will be scheduled in 7-14 days. The dressing and sutures will be removed at this time. If any problems develop which concern you or if you need anything, do not hesitate to call either one of us at the office or at home. We are ready to help at any time.

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