

**PERIODONTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
POST-OPERATIVE INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS
PERIODONTAL SURGERY**

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Unless otherwise stated or instructed, please follow all instructions for 2 weeks or until your first post-op appointment.

Oral Hygiene

Do not rinse your mouth for 24 hours after surgery. After 24 hours, the mouth should be rinsed gently after each intake of food and before retiring. StellaLife® should be used in the morning and at night before retiring, unless otherwise directed by the doctor. No food or drink should be consumed for one hour after using this rinse. Salt water rinsing (solution of 8 ounces of warm water and 1/8 tsp of salt) should be done during the day (4-6 times/day) until instructed otherwise. The rinses should be allowed to pool at the surgical area for one minute, not swished or rinsed vigorously. After one minute, *gently* expel the rinse. Do not forcefully spit.

Cleanse (brush) and floss the teeth not involved with the surgery. Do not brush the teeth involved in surgery, unless otherwise instructed. It is extremely important to keep your mouth clean; the success of your surgery depends on it. DO NOT use other mouthwashes, household cleaning products or any whitening agents.

In the event instructions are unclear and it is afterhours, this is not an emergency. Please do not brush/floss the area. Use warm salt water 4-6 times a day and either leave a voice message or wait until the next business day we are open to call for further clarification.

Diet

Food or drink should be lukewarm or cold for the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Food not requiring vigorous chewing is essential so that the surgical wound will not be traumatized. Avoid hard, fibrous, sharp or sticky foods (gum, lozenges, nuts, chips, ice, popcorn, seeds, salad, meats, bread) until otherwise instructed. Required mushy foods suggestions include soup, scrambled eggs, yogurt, jello, oatmeal, cream of wheat, mashed potatoes, mashed steamed veggies, protein drinks, Carnation Instant Breakfast and anything pureed in a blender (i.e. fruits with no seeds, vegetables, ice, ice cream, protein powder, milk).

During week 2 you may incorporate soft foods like casseroles, fresh fish, canned tuna, shredded chicken or steam veggies. Avoid spice and citrus.

Please keep foods away from the surgical site(s); the success of your surgery depends on not disturbing the surgical site. It is important to maintain a diet with normal caloric level that is high in protein, minerals and vitamins to support post-surgical healing. Dieting post-surgically should not be done. It can have negative effects on healing and lessen the chances of success of the procedure.

In the event diet instructions are unclear and it is afterhours, this is not an emergency. Please eat only foods listed above, and either leave a voice message or wait until the next business day we are open to call for further clarification

Bleeding

Minor oozing for the first 24-36 hours is okay. When blood mixes with saliva, it can appear to be more than it is. If continual bleeding is noted, moisten a tea bag, gauze, or tissue and place gentle but firm pressure on the bleeding area for 20 minutes. If some bleeding remains, complete 20 additional minutes of pressure with a tea bag. Black tea has tannins that help blood clotting.

If bleeding remains uncontrolled afterhours, please seek emergency care or call 911.

Swelling

Mild swelling following surgery is normal. Typically, it reaches maximum in 48-72 hours and diminishes thereafter. To help prevent swelling, cold should be applied immediately following surgery (alternating 30 minutes on, 20 minutes off). Ice in a plastic bag, then wrapped in a thin cloth towel, should be applied on the face where the surgery was done. Cold application is most important during the first 24 hours, but may be used up to 48 hours if swelling continues into the second day. You should also keep your head elevated above the level of your heart during the first 24 hours; 2-3 pillows may be necessary while sleeping.

Heat may help resolve swelling, but should not be applied until at least 2 days after surgery.

OTC Arnica Montana pellets taken orally can significantly reduce post-op pain and swelling.

If swelling increases after a few days, and is accompanied by increase in pain, firmness/warmth in the area and increase in body temperature, please call the office.

Dressing

A periodontal dressing or bandage may be used to cover the surgical area for 1-2 weeks after surgery. The dressing is placed around your teeth to protect the surgical area and must not be disturbed. If small pieces break off, there is no cause for concern. If large pieces break off, or the entire dressing becomes loose in the first couple days, please contact the doctor during normal office hours.

Sutures

Stitches are used to hold the gums in the proper position for ideal healing. They are typically removed within two weeks, depending on the procedure. Do not remove any sutures or disturb the sutures with your tongue, toothbrush or any other manner; removal or displacement will impair healing.

If a suture is loose or comes out, this is not an emergency. For questions afterhours, please leave a voice message or wait until the next business day we are open to call for further instruction.

Denture

If your denture touches the surgical site, you may be asked to refrain from wearing your denture for a period of time.

If you have a problem with your denture afterhours, this is not an emergency. Please stop using the denture and call your general dentist's office or our office on the next open business day.

Discomfort and Medications

Medications will aid in the healing process and help in keeping you comfortable. Antibiotics must be taken as prescribed; not doing so can affect success of the procedure.

Discomfort following surgery is normal; you may experience pain in varying degrees for 1-4 weeks post-operatively. Pain medications will not completely resolve the pain, but should bring it down to a manageable level. If pain medications are prescribed, it is usually best to take the first dose when the area is still numb. Research shows the best pain relief comes from combining Ibuprofen and Tylenol. Please take Ibuprofen 800mg every 6-8 hours for at least the first 2 to 3 days to reduce inflammation and associated pain. If additional pain relief is needed, please take OTC Tylenol 500mg either in combination or alternation with Ibuprofen using *one* of the two regimens as described below:

1. Regimen #1: Ibuprofen | 3-4 hours | Tylenol | 3-4 hours | Ibuprofen | 3-4 hours | Tylenol
2. Regimen #2: Ibuprofen + Tylenol | 6-8 hours | Ibuprofen + Tylenol | 6-8 hours | Ibuprofen + Tylenol

Varying from this regimen or not taking medication around the clock can result in more severe pain. **Please following one of the regimens above before contacting the office about uncontrollable pain.** In certain circumstances, you may be prescribed Norco(Vicodin) which would replace Tylenol in one of the regimens above. Keep in mind, you cannot operate a vehicle/machinery or do any thought-provoking work on this medication. Do not take Norco and Tylenol at the same time as they both contain the same drug. Also, please keep in mind, even with pain medication, some discomfort is normal.

If a steroid medication was prescribed, please take all pills at one time for each day.

Sensitivity follow surgery is normal. This type of discomfort can range from mild to severe and will typically decrease gradually with each week. Pain medication will not resolve pain from sensitivity. Instead, please avoid hot/cold extremes. Mouth breathing or open mouth sleeping can make this worse. We will introduce de-sensitizing products after your initial healing period to help with any remaining sensitivity.

If you have moderate-to-severe pain, other than sensitivity, and have tried the regimen above, please call the office.

Physical Activity

Please avoid strenuous activity to prevent excessive bleeding and swelling during your immediate recover period (7 days).

Smoking

Smoking causes high failure of any grafting procedure. All smoking must be stopped for at least 3 weeks post-operatively and minimized for the next several weeks following to ensure the best healing and success of your surgical procedure.

Alcohol

All intake of alcohol should be stopped until after your sutures have been removed to prevent suture resorption, negative drug interactions and allow proper healing.

Other Do Nots

Vigorous spitting or rinsing, drinking through a straw, creating a “sucking” action with your mouth, or using an oral irrigation device like Waterpik. Please do not pull out your lip to look at the site, or for any reason.

If you have a question, or do not understand these instructions, please call the office during normal business hours at 512.443.5704. If we are closed, please refer to the ***bold/italicized*** instruction below each category. We will return any call the next business day we are open. Keep in mind, we are closed every other Friday through Monday.

In the event of a ***true*** periodontal emergency outside normal office hours, please call 512.443.5704 for the emergency call number.

If your airway starts to feel obstructed or you have trouble breathing, **CALL 911.**