

# Soft Tissue Graft Post Op Care instructions

## **First 24 hours:**

No rinsing. Skip brushing till next week.

## **First few days:**

Minimal talking. Talking is ok but extensive conversation can stress and irritate the graft. Minimize touching of roof of mouth, this can cause the tissue glue to come off early.

If you were instructed to wear a custom stint, please wear for at least 4 days straight and do not remove even when eating or sleeping. Dr. Lai may instruct you to wear your stint for longer.

## **For 1<sup>st</sup> week:**

No brushing at all. Do not pull lip. Do NOT look at area, since this can tug and irritate the area.

Take medications as instructed. Use only the prescription mouth rinse. Rinse very gently. Do not swish hard.

Diet: Very soft mashed up food for this first week. Example, yogurt, mashed potatoes, protein shakes, steamed mashed veggies. NO straws. NO carbonated drinks. NO alcohol. NO salads, NO sandwiches. NO hard or crunchy food.

Smoking will compromise graft. Please avoid while healing as much as possible.

## **For rest of month (weeks 2, 3, and 4)**

No brushing at graft site but ok to brush everywhere else. If able to floss without disturbing graft area then that is ok too. At the graft site use a cotton swab dipped in the prescription rinse and gently swab the teeth only, do NOT touch gum area.

Diet: Still very soft but slightly firmer than first week. You can have foods that are easily cut with a fork. For example you can have scrambled eggs, soft bread, pasta, fish, rice, oatmeal, and soft ground meat. But remember to chew on the other side (or back teeth if you had graft on front teeth). Still NO straws. NO carbonated drinks. NO salads, NO sandwiches. NO hard or crunchy food.

NO SMOKING for the whole 4 weeks.

## **In Case of bleeding:**

The tissue glue on the roof of your mouth may come off early. In these cases it is common to have bleeding. Use a wet tea bag and hold pressure for 1-2 hours. Repeat as needed, you may leave tea bag in mouth for longer. The tea bag MUST be wet or damp, do NOT use dry tea bag or dry gauze. Tea has ingredients that help with the bleeding, so if you do not have any at home please get some to use over using something else. If you do use a tea bag it may stick to the area, do NOT pull on the tea bag since this can pull the clot. Instead add more water to your mouth until the tea bag loosens on its own. You may also sleep with the tea bag in your mouth if needed.

Any questions or concerns please contact our office.

### **Expectations After a Soft Tissue Graft**

After you have a soft tissue graft such as a gum graft there are some things you can expect. For example, it is completely normal to experience some level of swelling, discomfort, pain, bleeding and bruising. Bruising can happen around the eye area, chin, cheek and lip area. This will typically resolve over the next several days. However, if you experience anything extreme that causes concern you should contact the office. If you have signs of infections such as increase temperature, large swelling associated with pain or anything at all that would cause concern for infection then please contact the dental office to see if an antibiotic is needed. You may also have some tissue sloughing in the area. Some slight sloughing can be considered normal. However, it is also possible that the graft did not take in which case it is best to ignore the area and leave it alone than to pull on the lip and look. If you happen to see the grafted area it may be white or pale pink for a time before the color starts to normalize. Keep in mind some grafts will remain slightly more pale than surrounding tissue. In most cases grafting procedures are successful however if the graft did not take the area will need a certain amount of time to heal before anything can be done in the area. This means that the best course of action is to leave the area alone and let it heal for approximately four weeks. Therefore, no other treatment can be done during this period of time. If on the other hand you are uncertain please follow the instructions provided to you. These instructions include diet restrictions and brushing restrictions.

For additional question please contact our office.