



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: SOFT TISSUE GRAFT

1. BLEEDING

- Bite firmly on the provided gauze for **30-45 minutes** after surgery.
- If bleeding continues, replace with a fresh gauze pad. Fold several times and dampen the gauze prior to applying firm pressure for another **30 minutes**.
- Slight oozing or pink saliva is normal for **24-48 hours**.
- If bleeding is heavy or persistent:
 - Keep your head elevated.
 - Continue to apply **firm pressure** by biting on moist gauze.
 - Gently rinse or swish with **ice cold water**.
 - Bite on a **moist black tea bag** for 30 minutes.

2. PAIN MANAGEMENT

- Take **Ibuprofen (600 mg) and Tylenol (1000 mg) every 6 hours, around the clock, for the first 48-72 hours** after surgery, even if pain is minimal. This helps control inflammation and prevent pain from escalating.
- Consider **taking with food** or **staggering doses every 3 hours** to avoid upsetting your stomach.
- After 72 hours, continue as needed.
- If prescribed stronger pain medication, take it as directed **only if needed**, and avoid driving or operating machinery while taking it.

3. SWELLING & BRUISING

- Swelling is expected and typically peaks around **48-72 hours** post-surgery before gradually improving.
- Apply an **ice pack** to the area **for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off** for the first **48-72 hours** to minimize swelling.
- Bruising in the area, on the cheeks, or under the jaw is normal and will resolve over time.

4. DIET

- Stick to **soft, cool foods** (smoothies, yogurt, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, protein shakes) for the first **3-5 days**.
- Avoid **hot (temperature), spicy, crunchy, acidic, or chewy foods** that may irritate the graft or donor site. **Do not use straws, carbonated drinks, or alcohol** for at least **5 days**.
- Chew on the opposite side of the mouth and **avoid the grafted area entirely** while eating.
- Stay well hydrated and avoid skipping meals.

5. ORAL HYGIENE

- Do not brush or floss the graft site or the donor area for **10-14 days**.
- You may resume gentle brushing and flossing of **all other teeth** the day after surgery, avoiding the surgical areas.
- • If prescribed an antimicrobial mouthrinse, use it **twice daily** for **7-10 days**.
- Gently rinse with **warm salt water** (½ teaspoon salt in 8 oz of warm water) **3-4 times daily**, especially after meals.

6. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Limit physical activity for **3-5 days**. Avoid strenuous exercise, bending over, or lifting to prevent bleeding and swelling.

7. SMOKING & VAPING

- **Do not smoke or vape for at least 7-10 days**. Smoking delays healing and significantly increases the risk of graft failure.

8. GRAFT SITE CARE

- **Do not disturb the graft or donor site** with your tongue, fingers, toothbrush, or food.
- A protective dressing or membrane may have been placed—**do not remove or disturb it**.
- The graft will appear pale, white, or gray during the early healing period. This is normal and does not indicate infection.
- Avoid using electric toothbrushes, water flossers, or any irrigation near the surgical area until cleared by the surgeon.
- Do not pull on the lips or cheeks to “check the area”—this may dislodge the graft.

9. JAW STIFFNESS & OPENING

- Jaw soreness and stiffness are normal, especially after removal of lower teeth.
- Begin **gentle jaw stretching exercises** on the **third day** after surgery to help restore normal movement.
- Apply **warm compresses** and continue with soft food until full range of motion returns.

10. SIGNS OF COMPLICATIONS – CALL US IF YOU NOTICE:

- **Persistent or excessive bleeding** beyond 24 hours.
- **Severe pain** not relieved by medication.
- **Swelling that worsens after 3 days** instead of improving.
- **Fever (101°F or higher), chills, or pus-like drainage.**
- **Difficulty breathing, swallowing, or persistent numbness.**
- **Bad taste, foul odor, or intense pain starting several days after surgery** (possible dry socket).

For any concerns, call our office at **(623) 304-7701**. If after hours, you may contact Dr. Fryberg directly at **(310) 595-4903**. Scan the QR code below to save his contact details.



Thank you for trusting us with your care!