



NEW YORK

PERIODONTICS

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Our 24-hour emergency concierge number is 212-838-0940.

Post-Surgical Home Care Instructions for GUM GRAFTING SURGERY

1. Place ice in a plastic freezer bag or take cold packs and wrap either in a towel and hold it over the surgical site(s) on the outside of your face (not inside). Do not sleep with ice on your face. Ice reduces swelling that usually peaks 48-72 hours after the procedure; pressure helps control bleeding. Use ice intermittently (20 minutes on/20 minutes off) for the remainder of the day and much of the following day when possible.
2. Take pain medication as directed. Pain is normal to a certain degree. Please keep in mind you just had surgery in your mouth and this can become painful during the first two weeks. Pain medications are most effective when taken **BEFORE** the full onset of pain. The most common side effects for narcotic pain killers (if prescribed) are an upset stomach /constipation and nausea. Take these medications with food. Alcohol should not be used if you are taking narcotic pain killers (e.g. Tylenol with codeine, Vicodin/Hydrocodone, Percocet/Oxycodone, etc.). **Do not stop antibiotics without consulting with the doctor.**
3. Expect oozing of blood from the surgical area. When mixed with saliva, this can appear worse than it really is. Should bleeding persist, bite on cotton gauze provided to you for 20 minutes. Make certain the gauze is folded and thick enough to create "pressure" on the bleeding area. Do not rinse afterwards. If the bleeding continues or if you are concerned, please call the office at any hour. Bleeding from the roof of the mouth (if tissue was harvested from there) can bleed very easily and should be controlled by putting pressure on it.
4. Eat as normal as you feel comfortable doing after the surgery. Softer diets can be more comfortable but are not necessary. Chew foods on the opposite side of the surgical area. **AVOID SEEDS, SPICY AND CRUNCHY FOODS.**
5. There should be **NO STRENUOUS EXERCISE FOR 48 HOURS**. You should not smoke during the post-op period since it increases the risk of infection, graft failure and bleeding. This includes smoking cigarettes, cigars, marijuana and vaping. Please ask your doctor at New York Periodontics if you have any concerns about when to start smoking again.
6. Sleep in an elevated position (extra pillow) when possible, for the first night after surgery to help reduce the chance of bleeding and discomfort. We recommend placing a towel over your pillow top to avoid any blood stains should bleeding occur.
7. Rinse your mouth with a saltwater solution starting the day after surgery for comfort. It helps to do this after each meal. Use 1 tablespoon of salt in 8 ounces of warm water. **DO NOT RINSE FORCEFULLY and DO NOT BRUSH, FLOSS or use OTHER HOME CARE DEVICES in the surgical site.** You can also use your usual mouthwash, if desired.
8. If you are utilizing a removable prosthesis of any sort, discuss how to use this after the surgery with your doctor. Your dentist / surgeon often needs to make a necessary adjustment or check the fit before you try to insert them. Premature insertion of dentures pressing on the graft **MAY** jeopardize successful healing and are a common cause for graft failure.
9. Avoid pulling on your lip or cheek to look at the surgical area. This can cause the graft to be displaced or can cause bleeding.
10. **If you are in doubt about any of these directions or think there is a problem related to the healing of the gum graft site(s), please do not hesitate to contact the office immediately.**

If you are having an emergency, you may contact your doctor at any time by calling our after-hours concierge team and simply ask to be transferred to the doctor's cell phone.