



Post-Operative Instructions for Bone Grafting

After Bone Grafting:

There are various types of grafting procedures, and the extent of post-operative pain and swelling will depend on the type of grafting that was done. If you had an extraction and grafting into the socket, there will be sutures in place. Avoid chewing directly in this area for several weeks. Some of the graft material may dislodge. This is normal and will feel like small granules. Do not be concerned; most of the graft material will stay in place.

In certain cases, a dissolvable suture will be used while in other cases the suture will be removed by the doctor within a few weeks. You may also have a membrane placed which may be visible as a white plastic-appearing material. Try not to disturb this, and keep it clean with gentle mouth rinsing.

Minimize any trauma to the area and rinse very gently and brush carefully on the adjacent teeth starting the day after the procedure. If you are wearing a temporary prosthesis over the grafted site, try to avoid any contact between the temporary and the grafted site. If you feel it is putting excessive force on the grafted site, please call us, and we will provide further instructions.

Immediately Following Bone Grafting:

The gauze packet should be kept in place with firm pressure over the area. Remove the pack after 30 minutes. If there is continued excessive bleeding, replace with new gauze and bite firmly again. Vigorous mouth rinsing or chewing in the areas of the extraction should be avoided. This may cause increased bleeding or the blood clot to dislodge.

A liquid or soft diet is recommended for the first 24 hours. Avoid sucking through straws and eating hard or crunchy foods and spicy foods. Take the prescribed pain medication before the numbness from the local anesthesia wears off. Restrict your activities on the day of surgery and return to normal activities slowly. Place ice packs on the outside of the face where the extraction(s) were done. Use ice for the first 24 hours to decrease swelling by applying it on and off 20-30 minutes at a time.

Bleeding After Bone Grafting:

Slight bleeding and redness in the saliva are common after surgery. If there is excess bleeding, gently wipe any old clots from the mouth and then place clean new gauze over the area and bite firmly for 30-40 minutes. Repeat every 30-40 minutes with new gauze. If excessive bleeding continues, bite on a cold-water-moistened tea bag firmly for 30-40 minutes. Slowly remove the tea bag and leave the area alone. If there is still continued excessive bleeding, call our office for further instructions. Also, avoid excessive talking, drinking from a straw, or excessive chewing if there is continued bleeding.

Swelling After Bone Grafting:

Post-Operative Instructions for Bone Grafting (contd.)

Swelling is normal after any surgical procedure. The extent of swelling varies and depends on the extent of the surgery and each individual patient. Swelling around the mouth, jaws, cheeks and below the eyes is not uncommon. The swelling will usually reach its maximum 2-3 days after the surgical procedure. The swelling can be decreased by the immediate use of ice packs in the first 24 hours. Ice packs should be applied to the outside next to where the surgery was done. Keep the ice on for 20-30 minutes at a time, then remove for 20-30 minutes. Also, sitting upright and not lying flat on the first day will help decrease the amount of swelling.

Pain After Bone Grafting:

Pain medications are normally required after surgery. If you can take Ibuprofen (Motrin[®] or Advil[®]), take 400-600mg every 6-8 hours or as prescribed by your doctor. Ibuprofen will help with pain relief and as an anti-inflammatory. If you cannot take Ibuprofen, then 1-2 tablets of regular Tylenol[®] should be taken every 4 hours. If you were prescribed a stronger pain medication such as Vicodin[®], Norco[®], Tylenol[®] with codeine or Percocet[®] (oxycodone with acetaminophen), you can take that in addition to your Ibuprofen if the pain is severe. Follow the directions written on your prescription bottle. If you do take any of these medications, do not drive or work around machinery. Also, avoid alcohol while taking these medications. If the pain is severe, not controlled with your medications, or persists, call our office for further instructions.

Oral Hygiene After Bone Grafting: Rinsing should not be done the day of surgery. You can brush your teeth the day after surgery, but be careful not to traumatize the area where surgery was done.

Diet After Bone Grafting:

Do not use straws for the first 7-10 days post-surgery. Drink from a glass. The sucking motion can cause more bleeding by dislodging the blood clot. You may eat anything soft by chewing away from the surgical sites. High calorie, high protein intake is very important. Nourishment should be taken regularly. You should prevent dehydration by taking fluids regularly. Your food intake will be limited for the first few days. You should compensate for this by increasing your fluid intake. At least 5-6 glasses of liquid should be taken daily. Try not to miss meals. You will feel better, have more strength, less discomfort and heal faster if you continue to eat.

Nausea and Vomiting After Bone Grafting:

Try and stay hydrated with liquids. Sometimes patients feel nauseated from the prescribed pain medications, particularly the stronger pain medications such as Vicodin[®] or Percocet[®]. Try stopping the pain medications and see if nausea subsides. If you have continued nausea and vomiting, call our office for further instructions.

Bruising and Discoloration After Bone Grafting:

After surgery, some patients may notice bruising or discoloration around the areas of surgery. This is normal postoperatively and can take several days to subside.

Jaw Tightness or Limited Mouth Opening After Bone Grafting:

This is normal following surgery and will improve and resolve over time.

Smoking After Bone Grafting:

Smoking can inhibit the healing process and can cause more pain after surgery. To ensure the best post-operative recovery, refrain from smoking as long as possible after surgery (at least 7-10 days post-surgery).