

DR. CHARLES A. WHITE

Practice Limited to Periodontics

201 N. 34th Street • Rogers, AR 72756

www.drcawhite.com

Phone (479) 631-6074

Fax (479) 936-8660

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS GUM GRAFTING PROCEDURES

PRESCRIPTIONS: Have all prescriptions filled prior to surgery. Take your medications only as directed. Regular medication prescribed by your physician should be taken as usual, unless you are told to do otherwise. Take PAIN MEDICATION before you begin to feel discomfort, with fruit juice or a full glass of water. Never take pain medication on an empty stomach. Fasting is not required prior to surgery. Do not use aspirin or products containing aspirin the week prior to or following surgery. If ANTIBIOTICS were prescribed, take them as directed until all have been taken. Patients taking birth control pills should be aware that ANTIBIOTICS could alter the effectiveness of the birth control pill. PERIOGUARD oral rinse should be used twice a day starting the day after surgery to kill bacteria around the surgical area. PHENERGAN may be prescribed. This is to be used only if you experience nausea. If ATIVAN, VALIUM, or any sedative is prescribed YOU MUST HAVE SOMEONE DRIVE YOU FOR THE APPOINTMENT.

Please have your index finger on both hands free of nail polish or artificial nails so that we can monitor your vital signs.

SWELLING: After 24 hours, a heating pad or moist heat may be used to decrease swelling. When using heat, apply 20 to 30 minutes of each hour. It is also beneficial to take the anti-inflammatory medication IBUPROFEN or ALEVE and to sleep with your head elevated to reduce swelling. If swelling persists after several days and is not resolving, contact Dr. White for instructions.

BLEEDING: Some bleeding is normal during the first day following surgery. Cover your pillow with a towel to prevent staining. If you have a surgical stent, wear it until you return for the first postoperative visit. Purple blood clots sometimes form along the edges of the stent and may bleed for prolonged periods of time. Simply remove the blood clots with moist gauze and apply pressure to the stent to stop bleeding. SPECIAL NOTE: AVOID PEROXIDE, ALCOHOL, CARBONATED BEVERAGES, DRINKING STRAWS, AND SMOKING for at least 24 hours. These things, as well as heat, can contribute to bleeding problems.

NUTRITION: Adequate nutrition is essential for normal healing. The first 24 hours following surgery your diet should be restricted to COLD LIQUIDS. Dietary supplements, such as Instant Breakfast or Nutriment, are good. Gradually progress to soft foods, which are easily chewed and swallowed. Chew your foods using teeth far removed from the graft sites so that the grafts are not disturbed. Do not skip meals. If you take nourishment regularly, you feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort, and heal faster. Please eat a normal meal before surgery.

HEALING: Different types of gum grafts heal at different rates. Your graft may appear red and inflamed and have some mild swelling. These are normal and should not be of concern. It is common for superficial parts of a graft to appear white in color. Usually, the donor site on the side of the palate presents the most inconvenience during healing. If you have a surgical stent to cover the donor site, wear it until you return for the first postoperative visit.

PERIODONTAL DRESSING: If periodontal dressing was applied, you can only brush the tops of the teeth. If you are careful, this dressing should remain in place until your next appointment. Small particles of it may chip off but this is of no importance. If the dressing becomes loose but does not fall out on its own, contact Dr. White for instructions. The dressing may have sutures attached to it so don't attempt to remove the dressing.

SUTURE: The suture may be dissolved by the time you return for your first post-operative visit. However, sutures are often used that are removed after 3 or 4 weeks of healing.

REST: Plan to rest the remainder of the day of surgery and the following day. After that time, you should be able to return to your regular schedule, EXCEPT such activities as jogging, aerobic exercise, and other strenuous activities. These should be discontinued for the week following surgery. Use good judgement when returning to more strenuous activities.

PAIN: Following surgery, pain is usually mild to moderate in severity and usually persists for 24 to 36 hours. Your discomfort should gradually diminish after the first day. IF YOU HAVE SEVERE PAIN AFTER 24 HOURS, CONTACT DR. WHITE. Please make sure that you have no plans to fly for at least one week following surgery. One additional week would be best. Flying could retard healing and cause unnecessary pain and bleeding due to pressure. Automobile trips are fine as long as the surgery is not extensive. Keep in mind that if you leave town following surgery you may not be able to be seen as quickly by Dr White if there is a problem. We want the opportunity to see you if there are any problems following surgery.

RESULTS OF GRAFTING: Do not worry about the way your grafts look during the first few weeks of healing. Dr. White is very meticulous in placing grafts but most grafts don't look great at first. Grafts are often too thick or have surface irregularities. Some grafts do not provide adequate root coverage. All of these situations can be easily corrected and are not unexpected. Remember that root coverage grafting is a project and not a procedure. The end result of your grafting will be outstanding!

QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS: It is our sincere desire to have you as comfortable as possible during the healing period. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call. Office phone 479-631-6074. Dr. White's cell phone: 479-644-1087. Dr. White's home phone: 479-936-7087.