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Periodontics & Dental Implants

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PRE- & POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS -- GUM GRAFTING PROCEDURES

PRESCRIPTIONS:

Have all prescriptions filled prior to surgery and please take your medication as prescribed. Current medication prescribed by your physician should be taken as usual, unless you are told to do otherwise. Take pain relieving medication before the numbness wears off. Staying ahead of the pain is critical to avoid severe discomfort. Never take pain medication on an empty stomach. Finish all antibiotics prescribed to prevent infection. Patients taking birth control pills should be aware that antibiotics could alter the effectiveness of the birth control pill and result in an unplanned pregnancy.

PERIDEX rinse (chlorhexidine gluconate 0.12% rinse) or ALCOHOL FREE LISTERINE should be used twice a day starting the day after surgery to kill bacteria around the surgical area. If you experience nausea let our office know, we can prescribe you an anti-nausea medication if needed. If any oral sedative such as Xanax, Valium, Ativan, and/or Halcion is prescribed before the surgery or IV sedation was completed during the surgery, you must have someone drive you to and from your surgical appointment.

SWELLING:

You can expect swelling. The inflammatory response happens after any surgery and usually reaches a peak at 72 hours postop (first 3 days). Please use the provided ice packs to apply to the skin around the surgical sites. The cold will constrict the area blood vessels and lead to less swelling during this time. An anti-inflammatory such as Naprosyn (naproxen) or Motrin (ibuprofen) is also useful to take as prescribed the first three days. This will limit the amount of inflammatory mediators produced at the surgery site. The combination of ice packs and anti-inflammatories leads to significantly less swelling during the first 3 days. If we can minimize the swelling, we minimize the majority of pain.

If the surgical sites are multiple teeth (whole mouth, half mouth, etc) some visible bruising can be expected as well. Following the recommendations outlined above will help minimize this. If swelling persists after 7 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 the first 24 hours and as needed if you have any break through bleeding afterwards.

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 the first 3 days. These agents will dissolve any blood clots and can lead to breakthrough bleeding.

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 72 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 delay healing and cause unnecessary pain and bleeding due to pressure changes. 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.

ORAL HYGIENE INSTRUCTIONS:

Do not brush or floss the teeth around the surgery sites until you return for your first post operative visit. ALL OTHER TEETH NOT TREATED SHOULD BE BRUSHED AND FLOSSED LIKE NORMAL. The doctors will check the surgery site and inform you when you may start brushing and flossing again. It will depend on the healing progression in the surgical area. You should use Peridex or alcohol free listerine as prescribed until the first post operative visit.

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 Ensure, are good. Gradually progress to eating 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.

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.

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 2 days (3 days postop). 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. If you feel the sensation of pressure or pulsation at the surgery site it is often a sign you are overexerting yourself. If you notice these symptoms discontinue the activity in question until 1 week postop.

RESULTS OF GRAFTING:

Do not worry about the way your grafts look during the first few weeks of healing. Dr. White/Dr. Blansett 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. Our goal is to ensure the most aesthetic and predictable result possible.

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. Please call or text as needed.