

Dental Implant Solutions

BONE GRAFTING POST-OPERATIVE CARE

Here are some directions to help your bone graft to integrate to its best potential.

General Instructions:

- 1) It is normal to experience a mild to moderate pain after your surgery. Take ibuprofen or Tylenol as needed for mild pain. If you have been prescribed pain medication take this as directed and as needed.
- 2) **It is better to take pain medication at the initial onset of pain than to wait and see if the pain gets worse.** Pain medication is much more effective when taken before pain becomes severe.
- 3) If you have been prescribed an antibiotic take this medication as directed until it is completely gone. If the antibiotic causes stomach upset or diarrhea eat yogurt or take acidophilus supplements to restore your intestinal bacteria to normal levels.
- 4) You may have been given an oral rinse (Peridex or similar product). Rinse with this product 2 times a day for 30 seconds for 10 days. Do not eat or drink for 30 minutes after use.
- 5) If a surgical flap was performed, rinse with warm salt water (1 cup water/1 teaspoon salt) or Peroxyl (available at the grocery store in the toothpaste section) for 1 minute 2 times a day for 10 days.
- 6) **Minor bleeding is normal for up to 24 hours.** If bleeding occurs, apply direct pressure to the area with a moist gauze or a tea bag (brown tea like Lipton) for 15 minutes. If bleeding persists or worsens call the office.
- 7) If you have swelling that feels hot/warm to the touch or if you have a foul taste in your mouth you may have an infection. **Call our office.**
- 8) **To reduce swelling** apply ice to your face in the area of the surgery for 15 minutes at a time several times over the next 48-72 hours to reduce swelling and bruising. Keep your head elevated when you sleep with extra pillows for a few nights. Sleep on your back to avoid pressure at the surgical site.
- 9) Bruising of the face can occur after surgery. This is normal and it should resolve after a week or so. Use Arnica cream (Amazon, Rite Aid, etc.) on the bruise to make it clear more quickly.

- 10) **Smoking and vaping are the main cause of bone grafting failure** since they reduce blood flow to the healing tissue. These habits will result in slower healing and possible negative outcomes. Do your best not to smoke or vape or to at least limit smoking or vaping until you have completely healed.
- 11) It is OK to lightly brush your teeth in the surgical area using a soft toothbrush and gentle motions. You may return to normal brushing habits after the incisions have healed and the sutures have been removed.
- 12) Try to avoid eating or drinking hot foods until the day after surgery. Warm food and liquids are fine. Hot foods may increase swelling and pain.
- 13) **Avoid chewing on the site of the bone graft for 16 weeks.** This is the time when the graft is most vulnerable to failure from forces.
- 14) Average times for the bone graft to integrate are 4-9 months. Make sure to follow any specific directions you were given for your individual graft.
- 15) It is common for adjacent teeth to have minor sensitivity for several weeks or more after the surgery. Call us if you have any concerns regarding this.
- 16) If you have a removable or fixed temporary **make sure the temporary is not pressing on the grafted area.** If you suspect this is happening, please call our office.
- 17) Lastly, the #1 reason that sutures come loose is the patient playing with them with their tongue. We know it's hard, but please avoid doing this.

Specific Grafting Types

Socket Graft:

- 1) Do not eat on the socket grafted area for **4 weeks** post-surgery. After that it is OK to chew soft and medium density foods in this area unless you were told otherwise.
- 2) You may experience “shedding” of bone graft pieces from the graft. This is not uncommon. It is OK.

Guided Bone Regeneration:

- 1) This type of bone graft is the most susceptible to damage from forces on the area. Do not eat anything in this area for at least **4 months** post-surgery.

- 2) DO NOT pull on your lip to look at the surgical site. This often results in the flap opening up which can result in failure of the graft. Call our office if you suspect your flap has opened.
- 3) Try not to sleep on the side that your bone graft is on (or both if both were done) for **2-4 weeks** after your surgery.
- 4) This type of graft takes the longest time to integrate. Be patient and protect your surgical site to achieve the best results.

Sinus Lift:

- 1) Sleep with your head elevated for **2-3 days** after your surgery to minimize sinus pressure. You can use an extra pillow or place a towel under your mattress to create an incline.
- 2) Avoid heavy exercise for **3-4 days** post-surgery. Walking, stretching, yoga, and Pilates are OK. Avoid weightlifting and running.
- 3) Avoid lifting heavy objects for **3-4 days** after the surgery.
- 4) **It is very important** to not forcibly blow your nose for **2 months** after your surgery. Blow gently with your mouth open (to decrease sinus pressure).
- 5) **It is very important** to AVOID HOLDING YOUR SNEEZES for **4 months**. Sneeze “sloppily” and loudly with your mouth open in order to reduce sinus pressure. Your friends will forgive you 😊
- 6) Avoid sucking through a straw for **4 days** after your sinus surgery.
- 7) Try not to sleep on the side that your sinus lift was on (or both if both were done) for **2-4 weeks** after your surgery.
- 8) If you experience sinus pressure or stuffiness it is OK to use Sudafed or Afrin Nasal Spray for comfort.
- 9) Avoid using any sinus flush, such as a Neti-pot, for **4 weeks** after surgery.