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**INSTRUCTIONS FOR AFTER SOFT TISSUE GRAFTING SURGERY**

Everyone will have some, or all of the following symptoms: **bleeding, swelling, discomfort and bruising.** It is hard to predict to what degree you may experience these symptoms. They usually peak by the 3rd day and then begin to decrease. Adhering to the instructions below will help to optimize your healing.

**THINGS TO DO**

**BLEEDING:** For the first 48 hours elevate your head whenever you lie down. Small amounts of blood may color your saliva the first few hours after surgery. If significant bleeding occurs, place firm pressure on the site with moist gauze or a non-herbal tea bag for 30 minutes.

**ICE:** Place the ice for 20 minutes on and 10 minutes off to reduce swelling and inflammation as much as possible for the first 24 hours.

**DIET:** Within the first 24 hours after surgery, food and drink should be cool or cold. For the first week soft foods (smoothies, yogurt, soft pasta, eggs, etc.) are recommended so that the surgical area will not be disturbed. A nutritious diet throughout your healing stage is very important for your comfort, temperament, and healing. Avoid alcoholic beverages when taking prescribed medications. Avoid foods with sharp edges (i.e. chips) or pieces that will get stuck in the gums (i.e. popcorn, seeds)

**MEDICATIONS:** Before the anesthetic wears off, eat something soft and take a pain pill. We recommend 800mg of Ibuprofen alternated with 1000mg of Tylenol every 4-6 hours for the first 3 days even if you don’t have discomfort. You may have been prescribed some stronger pain medication to take as directed. It is essential to take all medications as directed. If you develop a rash, itching or other unusual reactions, stop taking your medication and notify the office.

**ORAL HYGIENE:** Do not rinse your mouth for 24 hours after surgery. You may brush the other teeth away from the surgery site but do not brush or floss near the surgical area until we see you and tell you to do so (usually 7-14 days). You may dip a Q-tip in the given mouth rinse and GENTLY dab the surgical area to help kill bacteria for the first 2 weeks. Rinse your mouth out (don’t swish) with warm salt water (1/2-tsp. salt in 8-ounce glass of warm water). Hold this in the mouth for 30 seconds and spit out. Do this 4-5 times per day for 7 days.

**THINGS NOT TO DO**

**AVOID SMOKING, PULLING ON YOUR LIP TO SEE THE AREA, SPITTING, VIGOROUS RINSING, HOT BEVERAGES, AND DRINKING WITH A STRAW**. These actions may stimulate bleeding and/or loosen the stitches which can cause complete failure of the graft procedure. **Please do not touch, manipulate, or look at the surgical area until we see you.** All tissue graft procedures require 6+ weeks of healing before we re-evaluate the outcome so it is best to leave the area alone.

**AVOID PHYSICAL ACTIVITY** for at least 72 hours. This includes heavy lifting, elevating your heart rate or lowering your head below your knees. Physical activity may cause a renewal of bleeding, or increased swelling. Slowly work your way back into normal activities after a minimum of 3 days of inactivity. If you have swelling, you should wait until it has gone down to initiate physical activity.

Be sure to call the office if you have any questions or concerns. If you believe you have an emergency situation at any time, call the office at (503) 222-9961 or Dr. Setter’s cell phone at (503) 974-6569.