

POST-SURGICAL INSTRUCTIONS (GRAFT)

REST

After your surgery, I strongly recommend that you return home and relax. You may go back to work the next day, but please wait several days before resuming strenuous exercise or activities. **For the first three days following your graft surgery, be careful and avoid getting bumped in the area where the graft was placed.** Trauma to this area may cause the graft to be lost. Take appropriate precautions and make plans to avoid activities like holding babies, feeding large dogs or crocodiles, etc.

MEDICATION

You will probably be prescribed a non-steroid anti-inflammatory pain reliever (NSAID) such as Motrin (ibuprofen) or Vioxx. This medication helps relieve swelling as well as pain. Please take this non-steroid, as prescribed, even if you have no pain in order to benefit from its anti-inflammatory properties. A narcotic (Vicoprofen or Lortab) may be prescribed to help relieve more intense pain at night or at other times as needed. It may make you drowsy, so please do not drink alcohol or drive while taking this medication!

You may be prescribed an antibiotic. It is very important that you take every tablet in your prescription at the proper times, no matter how good you feel. The purpose of the antibiotic is to prevent infection. If you do not take the antibiotic you risk infection. The only exception is that you may stop taking the antibiotic if you think that you might be developing an allergic reaction to the antibiotic. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include redness, itching and swelling. If these symptoms are present or you are concerned, please call Dr. Benson.

SURGICAL DRESSING

A putty-like dressing may be placed over the site of the graft. Please be careful not to disturb it until you return to the office to have your sutures removed.

STINT

A plastic sheath (stint) may be placed over the donor site on the roof of your mouth. It protects the donor site while healing begins. Do not remove the stint until the morning after surgery. At that time, remove it carefully and rinse and brush it out. After the first night, the stint may be worn, as needed, until the donor site is no longer tender. If discomfort is a problem, squeeze a little **Orabase with Benzocaine** (available at drug stores) on the inside of the stint to numb the roof of your mouth.

SUTURES - BRUSHING

There may be sutures (stitches) placed in your mouth at the time of surgery. If they are resorbable sutures the portion in the gum tissue will dissolve naturally and the remaining pieces will detach about 5-7 days after the procedure. If they are non-resorbable sutures, they will be removed in the office about a week after the procedure. Do brush and floss the rest of your teeth, but please do not use a toothbrush in the surgical area. Use toothpaste on a Q-tip or a washcloth wrapped around your fingertip for cleaning in the surgical area. You may use mouthwash, but you may prefer to dilute it if it feels uncomfortable at full-strength.

FOOD

Good nutrition is important to speed your recovery. After surgery, eat softer foods, which do not cause discomfort or dislodge the dressing (See Soft Foods list). You may gradually return to normal eating, as it becomes comfortable to do so. Please drink plenty of fluids, at least 6 glasses a day, for the first 2 days.

BLEEDING

There are no major blood vessels in the area of your surgery. Small blood vessels may continue to ooze small amounts of blood for as long as several days after surgery. If the oozing increases or is persistent, apply gentle pressure over the donor site with the stint in place. If this is not effective within fifteen to twenty minutes, please call Dr. Benson.

QUESTIONS

This information is provided to help you understand what to expect. If you have a problem or questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Benson at home at **770-730-9297**, or by calling his cellular phone at **404-983-6218**. We want to work with you to make your surgical experience a pleasant one and to get you back to your regular routine as soon as possible.