



# Central Valley Periodontics & Implants

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## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS – SOFT TISSUE SURGERY

**Protect the Grafted Site:** It is **extremely important** for the graft to heal undisturbed for the first week. Protect the area from movement, physical contact, and undue stresses.

**Palatal Stent:** A thin plastic appliance is sometimes made to cover the top of your mouth where the graft was removed. Remove the stent several times a day to gently rinse your mouth and to clean the stent with warm water. It is recommended that you wear the stent for the first three days. Continue to wear the stent as needed during eating and for your comfort during the first week.

**Pain:** It is best to start the pain medication before the local anesthetic wears off. Take your pain medicine as prescribed for the first 3-4 days after surgery. If you feel that you are having an adverse reaction to the medication, immediately stop taking it and call the office.

**Swelling:** Ice should be placed to the outside of the face over the surgical area immediately after surgery. Use an ice pack for about 10 minutes of each hour for the first 12 hours. You should also keep your head elevated above your heart for the first 48 hours. While these will help minimize swelling, some swelling is normal in the first 3-4 days.

**Bleeding:** The surgical area will normally ooze slightly for the first 1-2 days. This means that your saliva will appear pink or light red. Active bleeding is indicated by bright red blood in your saliva. If this occurs from the top of the mouth, seat the stent or place a moistened gauze or a tea bag over the site and apply constant, firm pressure for 15 minutes. If the bleeding occurs from the grafted site, apply constant, firm pressure with an ice pack **OVER YOUR LIP OR CHEEK** for 15 minutes. This normally will stop any bleeding. If active bleeding still occurs call the office.

**Antibiotics:** Take any antibiotics as prescribed by the doctor.

**Food:** Only eat soft foods during the first week. This means do not eat anything hard, crunchy, or with tiny seeds (such as nuts, potato chips, popcorn, and strawberries). Avoid hot and/or spicy foods because these may encourage swelling. Cool, icy drinks will help soothe the mouth as well as help to reduce bleeding and swelling. **DO NOT USE A STRAW THE FIRST WEEK.**

**Smoking and Alcohol:** Avoid tobacco, marijuana, and alcohol use for the first few days. These habits may increase the risk of complications during healing. Smoking is a risk for graft failure.

**Home Care:** During the first week, brush and floss all teeth **EXCEPT** those in the grafted area. You may gently rinse the surgical areas with warm salt water. Dissolve 1/8 teaspoon of salt in 8 oz of warm water. Gently rinse 4-5 times per day especially after eating.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS, DO NOT HESITATE TO TELEPHONE THE OFFICE AT ANY TIME. 209-572-6008.**