



Physical Therapy Instructions After Connective Tissue Gingival Grafting

Now that your stitches have been removed, it is very important to keep the surgically treated area(s) clean. As with any wound, cleanliness promotes rapid healing. The surgical site is likely to be tender, and your graft may even look red, swollen or a little white. The treated area may bleed when gently brushed or flossed. This is normal, please do not be alarmed. Do the best you can, but keep at it! Within a week, the bleeding and discomfort, if present, will be gone. Remember, the healing will not be complete for four to eight weeks, but your hard work with hygiene will help you to heal closer to four weeks. That's physical therapy working!

Your teeth may be very sensitive to cold liquids. This is a very common, usually a temporary side effect of the surgery. If this does not improve within one month, we will be happy to apply desensitizers to speed up the process.

Listed below are instructions on how to use the various cleaning tools. **We recommend that you avoid using an electric or "powered" toothbrush in the surgical site for six weeks after this type of surgery.** If you have any questions regarding this or any other concerns please do not hesitate to call us.

Floss: Please remember to floss normally, but gently. Floss will never disrupt or harm a graft, provided that excess force is not used. Please be careful not to "snap" the floss between the teeth of the treated area.

End-Tuft Brush: This special brush should be used at least **three times daily** to clean the teeth in the area of the graft. The brush is specifically designed to clean individual teeth. Although it may seem like this brush may harm the graft, it is very important to keep the tooth under the graft clean. The safest and most effective method to use this brush is to think of it as "cleaning under your fingernails." The bristle tips should disappear between the tooth and the new gum tissue, but please do NOT brush directly on the graft. Again, please do not be concerned if there is slight bleeding while brushing and flossing. If prolonged bleeding, excessive swelling or lingering discomfort occurs, please call the office immediately at (916) 446-9100 for advice.

This is truly the "no pain, no gain" part of periodontal care. If all has gone well, the first week was easy. We are confident that your hard work between week two and week six will result in an excellent result. We wish you a lifetime of dental health.

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