



Bone Graft Post Operative Instructions

1. Keep the gauze in your mouth with firm, stable pressure for 1½ to 2 hours after you arrive home. After 1½ to 2 hours, remove the gauze slowly and gently. At that time, you can begin eating, drinking, and taking your prescribed medications.
2. Swelling after surgery is normal and typically peaks 2-3 days after your procedure. Place ice packs over your face -- 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off -- for two days following surgery. Ice packs placed day three and beyond are not as effective in reducing swelling, however often provide relief from discomfort.
3. Our goal is to maintain an undisturbed healing environment in your surgery site, so it's important to:
 - A. Avoid spitting – this will disrupt the clot
 - B. Do not vigorously rinse out mouth for 2 days following your procedure
 - C. Do not use a straw for 2 days following your procedureI know, way too many "avoids" and "do not's." Keep in mind this is for a short time after your surgery and is to help you get back to your usual self as soon as possible
4. There will be a small amount of bleeding from the surgical site up to 5 days after surgery. If you have any concerns about further bleeding, immediately place firm pressure over the sites with damp gauze. Bleeding may also occur with vigorous exercise up to 2 weeks after surgery.
5. Most discomfort will occur between 3-4 days following surgery. Take medication for pain and discomfort as needed. It is often vital to "stay ahead of the pain" in the first 2 or 3 days by taking the pain medications before acute pain sets in. After the immediate postoperative period (2-3 days) pain medications should be taken only when needed. Any pain medication can upset the stomach and taking with food often helps. You should not drive or operate machinery after taking the pain medications.
6. Antibiotics, if given, should be taken until finished and on the schedule prescribed.
7. Keep your head elevated approximately 30 degrees with pillows. If you sleep on the side on which you had the surgery, the site may become more swollen. A towel over your pillow may be used to catch a small amount of bleeding expected after surgery.
8. After IV medications and surgery, you should not operate bicycles, skateboards or skates; any motorized vehicles; or any machinery for 24 hours.

Instructions for Postoperative Care (continued)

9. A soft diet may be required. (Soft, nourishing foods include yogurts, puddings, milkshakes, soups, eggs, and cottage cheese.) Limited opening of the mouth can be expected between one to three weeks after a procedure. Refrain from hard, crunchy foods (including popcorn, chips, pretzels, and nuts), which may harm the surgical site. Avoid extremely hot foods, but you can eat ice cream and frozen yogurt. If you have diabetes, maintain your regular eating habits as closely possible or follow the instructions given by your doctor.
10. Cleaning of the mouth can begin soon after surgery. For the week after surgery, do not brush the surgical site. Afterward very gentle brushing with a soft toothbrush may be resumed.
11. As discussed pre-operatively, smoking impedes healing and increases the chance that a bone graft will fail.
12. Sutures: if sutures have been placed, they will either dissolve or will be removed at your follow-up appointment.
13. After IV (sleep) medications, do not walk around without assistance. You should also only go up and downstairs with assistance. Use a seat belt at all times when you're seated in a motor vehicle.
14. If you have any questions or problems, please do not hesitate to call the office:
(530) 587-5440 Truckee or (530) 541-4042 South Lake Tahoe
Our website, TahoeOralSurgery.com, has a lot of helpful information.