

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR PATIENTS FOLLOWING GUM GRAFTING SURGERY

1. **DO NOT DISTURB THE WOUND** – In doing so you may invite *irritation, infection and bleeding*. Please avoid pulling or stretching the lip as this may compromise the graft.
2. **BLEEDING – REMAIN QUIET AND KEEP HEAD ELEVATED AT ALL TIMES, even while sleeping for the first 3 days** – Moisten the gauze to prevent it from sticking to the surgical site. Bite down by applying slight pressure and then remove the gauze every 20-30 minutes until bleeding stops. **SPOTTING** of blood is normal for the first 24 hours. If bleeding from the roof of the mouth is heavy or oozing, please remove the plastic shield (if present) and apply moist gauze or tea bag with slight pressure for 15 minute intervals until the bleeding stops. If the bleeding shows no signs of slowing down, call the office immediately. **DO NOT EAT, DRINK, OR SLEEP WITH GAUZE IN YOUR MOUTH, AS IT CAN BE A CHOKING HAZARD.**
3. **PLASTIC SHIELD (if applicable)** – A dressing may have been provided to protect the roof of your mouth. This device is to be worn continuously for the first 24 hours. The shield is not a requirement for proper healing; after 24 hours, it may be worn as needed and should be removed and cleaned at least 2-3 times per day with Periogard and toothbrush.
4. **HOME CARE – Do not swish or spit aggressively for the first 24-48 hours following surgery.** It is very important to maintain the blood clot over the healing site and swishing will disrupt it Use the prescription mouth rinse (Periogard) or warm salt water to do head tilt rolls as instructed. Do not brush the surgical area for 1 week following surgery, we will provide you with a soft “post-op” brush to start using on the teeth, but still staying away from the gums. All other teeth should be brushed and flossed as usual. **Rinse 2 times a day, morning and night, and do not rinse with water following Periogard.** Periogard rinse *WILL STAIN YOUR TEETH AND TONGUE after prolonged use (over 1 week); (Disregard if using StellaLife products and see their brochure for instructions).* After 1 week of rinsing with Periogard, switch to an alcohol free OTC rinse; we recommend the "Natural Dentist". You will notice your sutures coming loose at around 1-3 weeks and they may completely come out when you rinse.
5. **SWELLING:** To aid in the prevention of swelling after oral surgery, ice packs should be placed at intervals of 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off externally around the surgical site for a minimum of 4 hours following the procedure. Do not place ice packs inside the mouth. **Maximum swelling and bruising does occur 72 hours after surgery.** Bruising can be blue, purple, green, yellow, or brown and travel down the neck or up the cheek as it heals.
6. **ANTIBIOTICS:** If antibiotics are prescribed, be certain to continue taking the **full course.** *If you develop hives or a rash, please discontinue use, take Benadryl, and call our office immediately!* Antibiotics are prescribed as a precaution; however, this does not mean an infection will not occur.
7. **REST** – Get adequate rest. Strenuous activity can cause renewed bleeding and delayed healing for 5-7 days following a graft procedure. The proper care following the surgical procedure will hasten recovery and prevent complications.
8. **SMOKING or VAPING**– Refrain from these for at least 7 days post-surgery as this will hinder the healing process and can lead to complications.

**\*\*In order to aid in successful healing with the gum graft, please refrain from talking excessively, smiling excessively, or stretching the facial muscles post surgery. If you feel any tension in the surgical site, this could lead to graft failure.\*\***



## **DIETARY SUGGESTIONS FOLLOWING SURGERY**

**Please keep in mind it is important to eat a soft diet for the first week after surgery. This does not always mean a liquid diet, but “mushy”.**

The **first day** following surgery, cold/room temperature soft foods only such as:

- Anything put through a blender/food processor
- Cottage Cheese
- Jell-o
- Pudding
- Yogurt
- Applesauce
- Plain ice cream
- Milkshakes & Smoothies (DO NOT USE A STRAW)
- Protein drinks

The **second day** after surgery, you may introduce warmer “mushy” foods such as:

- Macaroni and cheese
- Broth or Creamed Soups
- Mashed potatoes
- Eggs any style
- Pastas
- Flaky fish
- Shredded meats
- Most steamed vegetables (i.e. Potatoes, Yams, Cauliflower, Squash, Green Beans, Carrots)
- Avocados
- Cheese
- Bananas
- Cream of wheat

### **DO NOT EAT:**

- Nuts/Seeds/Berries (strawberries, raspberries, & chia/flax seeds)
- Chips, Pretzels, or Popcorn
- Hard Breads (sourdough, dutch crunch, etc.)

### **Things to remember:**

- ✓ Avoid extremely hot foods and citrusy foods as they can irritate surgical site
- ✓ Chew on opposite side of surgical site
- ✓ Do not eat/drink with gauze in mouth
- ✓ Do not use a straw until you return to the Ueno Center for post-op evaluation