



## PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS – GINGIVAL GRAFTING SURGERY

Generally gingival grafting surgery has a very low incidence of post-operative infection and complications. The success of your surgery depends on you caring for your mouth after the surgery. The following information will assist you with your post-operative care.

### Expectations:

- You can expect some post-operative discomfort
- Your teeth may initially feel slightly loose, this is normal and disappears quickly
- Your teeth may be sensitive to hot and cold food, drinks and biting but this is only a temporary condition.
- Some swelling near the area of surgery can be expected in the following 2-3 days and is normal.

### Things you should DO:

- Use the prescribed Chlorhexidine mouthwash (e.g. Savacol, Plaqacide, Difflam) three times daily. Thoroughly rinse toothpaste out with water after tooth-brushing, prior to rinsing with mouthwash. Gently rinse with 10-15ml for one minute each time. Do not dilute the mouthwash; and do not swallow it.
- Keep your head elevated above your body (do not lie flat) for 24hrs after surgery.
- Clean (brush & floss) the rest of your mouth as normal. It is very important to keep your mouth clean during the healing phase.
- Apply ice packs to the face immediately post-surgery for 20min then remove for 10min. Repeat this cycle for the remainder of the day. This will help to reduce the amount of swelling.
- Take your pain medication (e.g. Panadol, Panadeine or Nurofen) as prescribed by your Periodontist. You should maintain a normal diet when taking pain medication.
- Eat soft foods for the first 24 hours.

### Things you should NOT DO:

- Pull lip down to view surgical site
- Eat or drink hot food / drinks while you are numb.
- Bite your lip or tongue when they are numb
- Play with any dressing, wound or stitches with your tongue
- Wash your mouth forcibly with water or a mouthwash
- Smoke – the longer you can go without smoking the faster the healing will proceed
- Brush the surgical area
- Drink alcohol on the day of your surgery
- Drink hot drinks during the first 24hrs post-surgery
- Strenuous activity for 24-48hrs post-operatively.

### Things to watch out for & Complications:

**Bleeding** - Bleeding may continue for several hours. Pink or blood tinged saliva may be seen and does NOT indicate a problem. It is normal to have a slight bleed after the local anesthetic wears off. Bleeding should be evaluated by looking at the surgical site. If you have any significant bleeding, then place a wet pack (e.g. damp gauze or clean handkerchief) over the wound and apply firm pressure for 15-20 minutes. Rest with head elevated. If bleeding continues then repeat compress for 20min. If bleeding persists please contact the surgery.

**Persistent Swelling** - Swelling will not become apparent until the day following surgery and will not reach its peak for 2-3 days. After this time, swelling should decrease but may persist for up to 7-10 days. Immediate use of ice packs will minimize swelling. Swelling usually decreases after the first 2-3 days. If there is no sign of improvement, after the first 2-3 days, please contact the surgery.

**Infection** - Although rare, infections of the surgical wound can occur. It is important to follow the post-operative care instructions carefully and keep your teeth clean. Signs of infection may include: increasing pain, increased swelling, bad taste or smell. If there is no sign of improvement, increasing pain and swelling or increased temperature or general tiredness after the first 2-3 days, please contact the surgery.

*\*A harmless superficial discolouration of your teeth may occur with prolonged use of products containing Chlorhexidine (Savacol®). This can be removed at your next tooth cleaning appointment.*

**Please contact BCPI reception on 07 3221 9363 if you suspect you have a complication or if you have a concern or query.**