



savannah periodontics
PERIODONTICS AND IMPLANT DENTISTRY

Crown Lengthening Post-Operative Instructions

In order for surgery site to heal properly, it is important to carefully follow these instructions. Once you've read through, please call or email the office if you still have questions. Contact information is listed on the reverse side.

During your surgery, a small amount of gum tissue and bone were removed to make the crown of the tooth longer. This is so your dentist can reach certain areas of the teeth, making them easier to repair. Dissolvable sutures are used. A pink packing that resembles putty is usually used to help hold the gum tissue in place while healing. To prevent complications, please read and follow the instructions.

Do:

- **Take all of your medications as prescribed:** Antibiotics and pain meds are prescribed to help prevent infection and keep you comfortable after surgery. If you have side effects such as nausea, vomiting, or hives, discontinue and call Dr. O'Neill immediately. Do not drive or work while you are taking the pain medication.
- **Try to leave the packing in place:** The packing is there to protect the surgery site and prevent the gum tissue from rebounding to its original position. To be the most effective, it should remain in place for at least 48 hours. If it falls out before that time, it won't hurt the surgery site but the tooth may become cold sensitive. This is normal. Don't try to put the packing back in.
- **Ice your face:** 15 minutes on, 15 minutes off. This is the most common thing that people forget to do, but is often the most helpful to prevent painful swelling and bruising. You may use an ice pack, zip-lock bags with ice, or a frozen bag of peas. Make sure to have a protective layer between your skin and the ice, such as a washcloth or paper towel. Continue icing until the swelling resolves, which could be 3-5 days.
- **Gently rinse with salt-water:** 1 teaspoon of salt in room-temperature water can be soothing to a sore surgery site. When rinsing, be careful not to swish vigorously as this may disturb the packing or cause bleeding. Do not use salt-water if you were prescribed Peridex Rinse.
- **Maintain a soft diet and chew away from the surgery site:** Eat only foods that are soft enough to cut with a fork and chew on the side opposite your surgery. Chew slowly and take small bites of food. If any of your front teeth were crown lengthened, do not bite into anything. Avoid foods such as popcorn, potato chips or sharp foods that could injure the surgery site.
- **Place firm pressure if the surgery site starts to bleed:** Most bleeding complications are caused by not icing or chewing over the surgery site. If this occurs, place firm pressure on the gum tissue on either side of the tooth/teeth that were worked on for approximately 10-15 minutes. If bleeding persists, call Dr. O'Neill immediately.
- **Restrict physical activity:** Avoid strenuous activity for at least 72 hours after the surgery to reduce bleeding complications. Even bending over to lift something or tie your shoes can increase pressure enough to cause bleeding.
- **Rest!** You will heal faster and feel better if you allow yourself time to rest. When resting and sleeping, prop your head up slightly with pillows to decrease bleeding, bruising and swelling.

Don't:

- **DON'T drink through a straw:** This could cause the site to bleed or dislodge the packing material.
- **DON'T cut or trim your sutures unless they are dangling:** As the sutures begin to dissolve, they will loosen. If sutures begin to unravel within the first several days, please notify the office or Dr. O'Neill.
- **DON'T brush over the surgery area:** You can brush all of your teeth except those involved in the surgery. If your teeth feel fuzzy or dirty, use a damp Q-tip to gently polish the enamel as long as you don't touch the gum tissue. Avoid mouth rinses that have alcohol, such as Listerine, as they will sting and inflame the surgery site. Begin brushing gently after the sutures fall out. At your post-operative appt, Dr. O'Neill will show you how to care for the surgery site until your dentist places the permanent crown.
- **DON'T eat the following foods:** Citrus, spicy foods, alcohol, salt. As a general rule, don't eat anything that you wouldn't want to come into contact with a paper-cut on your finger!

If you are having minor complications after surgery or have questions, please call the office during business hours:

Office: (912) 355-2688

Office Manager Email: beth@savperio.com

If you are having serious complications after surgery or problems with medications prescribed after your surgery, you are welcome to call or text Dr. O'Neill on his cell phone. Leave a detailed message if there is no answer.

Cell Phone: (912) 655-5911

Email: joneill@savperio.com

Serious complications include:

- Bleeding that will not stop after 15 minutes of firm pressure
- Severe pain that prevents you from sleeping or working
- Nausea/vomiting caused by the pain medications, antibiotics or other medications that were prescribed
- Allergic reactions to medications or products used in your surgery
- Painful swelling that is unusual in size
- Persistent fever, especially while on antibiotics

Please only call or text Dr. O'Neill's cell phone for emergencies. To reschedule appointments, please make sure to call the office phone number.

If you are having life-threatening symptoms such as anaphylaxis, trouble breathing, severe swelling of the throat preventing breathing, etc. call 9-1-1 immediately.