



savannah periodontics
PERIODONTICS AND IMPLANT DENTISTRY

Extraction/Bone Graft Post-Operative Instructions

In order for your extraction/bone graft 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, the tooth/teeth were carefully removed and a bone graft (granules of bone) was placed in the socket to maintain your ridge. This is to prepare for an implant in approximately 3 months. Collagen was sutured over the bone graft and a layer of skin glue was used to create a protective "scab" over the graft. Over time, your sutures will loosen and dissolve but since they are glued together, they will come out as all one piece. This is normal and does not mean you've lost the graft.

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. In some cases a Medrol Dose Pack (a steroid) may be prescribed to help with swelling. 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.
- **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 4-5 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 will disturb the graft site. 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 extracted, do not bite into anything. Avoid foods such as popcorn, potato chips or sharp foods that could injure the surgery site. If you were given a "flipper" to replace the missing teeth, wear it during the day, but remove at night before you go to bed. If you have trouble removing the "flipper" or if it's uncomfortable, call Dr. O'Neill or your general dentist's office.
- **Place firm pressure if the extraction site starts to bleed:** Most bleeding complications are caused by not icing or chewing over the socket. If this occurs, place folded gauze over the extraction site and apply biting pressure for approximately 10-15 minutes. A cold, damp tea bag often helps stop bleeding. If bleeding persists, call Dr. O'Neill immediately. If you have a flipper, you may need to remove it to apply pressure.
- **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 draw bone graft particles out of the socket or cause the site to bleed. THIS IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!
- **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.
- **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.