

Post-Operative Instructions for Bone Grafting

Innova Dental Implant Institute

Bone grafting (including guided bone regeneration, block grafting, interpositional grafting, or ridge augmentation) is performed to restore lost bone volume. This may be done in preparation for future implant placement or in conjunction with implant placement. Please follow these instructions carefully to encourage proper healing and a successful outcome.

Rest and Activity



Take it Easy

- ▶ Rest at home for the remainder of the day after surgery. Avoid strenuous activities (e.g., heavy lifting, vigorous exercise) for **1 to 2 weeks** or until your surgeon advises otherwise.



Normal Routine

- ▶ Light, non-physical activities can usually be resumed the day after surgery, but listen to your body and proceed gradually.

Bleeding



Gauze Placement

- ▶ Keep the initial gauze in place for about **30 minutes** or as instructed. Continue changing it every 30–60 minutes until bleeding subsides, typically within a few hours of surgery.



Roof of the Mouth (If Tissue Donor Site)

- ▶ If donor tissue was taken from the palate, you may notice additional bleeding in that area. If so, place damp gauze or a moist tea bag on the palate and apply gentle pressure for **20–30 minutes**.



Mild vs. Excessive Bleeding

- ▶ A slight ooze or pink saliva is normal for up to **24–48 hours**. If bleeding seems heavier, dampen fresh gauze with cold water, place it over the surgical site, and apply firm pressure for **30 minutes**. You may also use a moistened tea bag if needed.



When to Call

- ▶ If bleeding remains heavy or uncontrolled, or if you have any concerns, contact Innova immediately.

Swelling and Bruising



Ice Packs

- ▶ Apply ice packs to the cheek or face near the surgical site(s) for **20 minutes on, 5–10 minutes off** during the first **48 hours** while awake. This helps minimize swelling.



Head Elevation

- ▶ Keep your head elevated with pillows or by using a recliner for the first **2–3 days** to help reduce swelling.



After 48 Hours

- ▶ If swelling or stiffness persists, you may switch to warm compresses to encourage improved circulation and relief.



Bruising

- ▶ Some discoloration (black, blue, yellow) is normal and can appear a few days after surgery. It will resolve over time.

Pain Management



Medications

- ▶ Take prescribed pain medications or over-the-counter ibuprofen/acetaminophen as directed.
- ▶ Start your pain management before the numbness subsides for best results.



Narcotic Caution

- ▶ If prescribed a narcotic, avoid driving, operating machinery, or consuming alcohol while taking it.

Oral Hygiene



First 24 Hours

- ▶ Do not rinse vigorously or spit forcefully.
- ▶ You may gently brush your other teeth, avoiding the grafted area.
- ▶ Remember to use the medicated rinse (e.g., chlorhexidine).



Avoid High-Pressure Irrigation

- ▶ Do not use a WaterPik or similar device on or near the grafted area unless specifically instructed. High pressure can disrupt the graft.



After 24 Hours

- ▶ Begin gentle saltwater rinses ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt in 8 ounces of warm water) **2–3 times a day**, especially after meals. Let the water fall out of your mouth rather than spitting forcefully.
- ▶ Continue using any prescribed mouth rinse as directed.

Diet



First Day

- ▶ Start with clear liquids, then progress to soft foods as tolerated. Avoid using a straw for at least **2 weeks** (or as directed) to prevent suction that can disturb the graft.



Soft Foods

- ▶ Stick to nutrient-rich foods such as soups, smoothies (taken with a spoon), yogurt, scrambled eggs, and mashed vegetables.



Stay Hydrated

- ▶ Drink at least **5–6 glasses** of water daily to support healing. Avoid very hot foods or drinks for the first 24 hours, and do not chew directly on the grafted site.



Long-Term Chewing Precautions

- ▶ Depending on the type of graft, your Innova surgeon may advise you to avoid chewing hard, crunchy foods on the surgical area for several weeks to months.

Smoking and Tobacco



Stop Smoking

- ▶ Smoking dramatically reduces the success rate of bone grafts and slows healing. We strongly recommend quitting for at least **2 weeks before and after surgery**. If you need assistance, discuss nicotine alternatives (patches, gum) with your doctor.

Medications and Antibiotics



Follow Instructions

- ▶ Take prescribed antibiotic as directed until the full course is completed, even if symptoms improve.



Possible Side Effects

- ▶ If you experience a rash, diarrhea, or any adverse reaction, stop taking the medication and contact Innova.

Prosthetics and Night Guards



Dentures/Partials

- ▶ If you wear removable prosthetics, do not place them immediately after surgery unless your Innova surgeon instructs otherwise. Ensure they do not press on the grafted area.



Night Guards

- ▶ Wear a night guard only if your surgeon approves. Watch for any tightness or pressure near the graft.

Follow-Up and When to Call



Scheduled Appointments

- ▶ Attend all follow-up visits so we can monitor healing. If implants were placed simultaneously, additional checks will be required to ensure proper integration.



Suture removal

- ▶ If non-dissolving stitches were used then you will be scheduled to have them removed after 2 weeks from surgery. Nondissolving sutures will be white in color and have long tails.



Contact Innova If You Experience

- ▶ Persistent or severe pain not relieved by medication
- ▶ Excessive bleeding or prolonged bleeding after the first 48 hours
- ▶ Fever over 101.2°F or signs of infection (foul odor, discharge)
- ▶ Swelling or discomfort worsening after the third day
- ▶ Any unusual or concerning symptoms

We're Here to Support You

By closely following these post-operative instructions, you can help ensure a smooth healing process and maximize the success of your bone graft. If you have any questions or concerns, please call **Innova Dental Implant Institute**. We are dedicated to providing you with the best possible care and a successful outcome for your bone graft and future implant procedure.



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