

Post-Operative Instructions for Dental Bone Grafting

1. Bleeding

- **Minor bleeding** is normal for the first 24-48 hours after surgery. Bite gently on the gauze pad placed over the surgical area for at least 30-60 minutes, changing it as needed until the bleeding stops.
- **If bleeding persists or worsens**, apply firm pressure with a fresh gauze pad or a damp tea bag for 20-30 minutes. Avoid spitting, as it can dislodge the blood clot. If bleeding continues, contact our office immediately.

2. Swelling

- Swelling and bruising in the area of the surgery are common and typically peak around 48 hours post-operation.
- **To minimize swelling**, apply an ice pack to the outside of the face (20 minutes on, 20 minutes off) during the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, switch to warm compresses to reduce swelling.

3. Pain Management

- **Take prescribed pain medication** as directed by your doctor. Some discomfort is normal after bone graft surgery. If the prescribed pain medication does not sufficiently control your pain, contact our office.
- Over-the-counter medications like ibuprofen (Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) can also be used to manage pain as needed.

4. Diet

- **For the first 24 hours**, stick to soft, cold foods such as yogurt, applesauce, smoothies, or cold soup. Avoid hot foods and drinks, as they can increase swelling.
- **For the first week**, continue eating soft foods such as mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, and oatmeal. Avoid chewing on the side where the graft was placed.
- Stay hydrated, but **avoid using straws** for at least one week. The suction can disturb the bone graft site and cause complications.

5. Oral Hygiene

- Avoid brushing the surgical site for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, resume brushing your teeth carefully, avoiding the graft site.
- **Do not rinse or spit** for the first 24 hours, as it can disturb the healing process.
- The day after surgery, start **gently rinsing with warm salt water** (1/2 teaspoon of salt dissolved in 8 ounces of warm water) 2-3 times per day, especially after meals. Avoid vigorous rinsing.
- **Avoid commercial mouthwash** for the first week unless specifically instructed by your surgeon.

6. Sutures (Stitches)

- If dissolvable stitches were placed, they will fall out naturally over the course of 7-10 days. If non-dissolvable stitches were used, you will need to return to have them removed within 1-2 weeks.

7. Activity

- **Rest** for the first 48 hours. Avoid strenuous activities such as heavy lifting, exercise, or bending over for at least 3-4 days, as these can increase swelling and bleeding.
- Avoid leaning forward or bending over, as this can increase pressure and cause bleeding.

8. Smoking and Alcohol

- **Do not smoke** or use tobacco products for at least 72 hours after the procedure. Smoking can significantly delay healing and increase the risk of infection.
- **Avoid alcohol** for at least 72 hours, or while you are taking pain medications, as alcohol can interfere with the healing process.

9. Signs of Infection or Complications

- Monitor for signs of infection, including:
 - **Increased swelling after 48 hours**
 - **Severe or worsening pain**
 - **Persistent bleeding**
 - **Fever or chills**
 - **Pus or foul-smelling discharge**
 - **Difficulty swallowing or breathing**

If you experience any of these symptoms, contact our office immediately.

10. Bone Graft Material

- Depending on the type of bone graft material used, you may feel **small granules** in your mouth around the graft site. This is normal and part of the healing process. Do not disturb the area by poking with your tongue or fingers.

11. Follow-Up Appointment

- A follow-up visit is essential to monitor the healing process and ensure the bone graft is integrating properly. We will schedule this appointment within 7-14 days after surgery.

Emergency Contact Information

- **Office Phone: 021 4542475**
- **Email: Info@nostradental.ie**

Please contact our office if you have any questions or concerns about your recovery. We are committed to ensuring your comfort and a smooth healing process.