



Cleft and Craniofacial Center - University of Rochester, Golisano Children's Hospital

## Alveolar Bone Graft

### Postoperative Patient Instructions

#### General

- For a week or two after surgery, your child may need extra attention and understanding. Don't worry about "spoiling" your child during this time. It is OK to respond to your child's need for extra holding and comforting.
- After surgery, your child will be sleepy for several hours. Your child will have an IV in place for giving fluids and pain medicines. The lip and nose will be swollen. You may see a little bloody drainage around the lips and nose. You may see absorbable stitches on the inside of the upper lip.

#### Feeding

- Your child's gum line is repaired with absorbable sutures, but the repair is delicate for several months after surgery.
  - Do not allow your child to put anything hard in the mouth for 6 weeks. This could damage the stitches.
- Day of surgery and 1 day after: clear liquids. Examples include water, apple juice, jello, popsicles (taken off the stick), or clear broth.
- Days 2-9: full liquids. Examples include milk, yogurt, cooked cereals, puddings, ice cream, creamed soups, thinned pureed foods
- Days 10-6 weeks: soft foods. Examples include mashed potatoes, cereal soaked in milk, cooked vegetables, finely ground meats, well cooked pasta, and bananas. Anything that can be easily squished between two fingers should be safe to eat.
- No straws, hard candy, toast, potato chips, bread sticks, pretzels, or any other sharp or hard foods for 6 weeks.

#### Activity

- Most children are ready to return to school in about a week. If you have concerns or questions about when your child can return, please discuss this with us.
- No gym, sports, or heavily active play for 6 weeks after surgery.

## Pain

- Your child may have some mild discomfort at home. Give acetaminophen (Tylenol®), as directed by your child's doctor, or ibuprofen. Both are used to relieve mild to moderate pain and to reduce fever. It is important to take acetaminophen and ibuprofen exactly as directed by your doctor. Follow the directions on the package and ask your doctor or pharmacist to explain any part you do not understand. Do not take more or less of it than prescribed by your doctor. Do not take it any more often than prescribed by your doctor.
- If your child has more than mild discomfort, the doctor may prescribe medicine to help ease the pain. Give pain medicine as prescribed and instructed by your doctor and nurse.
- Try to schedule a dose of pain medicine around bedtime, especially for the first few days at home. This will help your child sleep better.

## Constipation

- Keep track of your child's bowel habits. He or she should return to previous bowel habits. If not, he or she may be constipated.

Call your child's pediatrician or the Plastic Surgery team if you think your child is constipated.

## Skin and Wound Care

- The incision in the mouth is closed with absorbable sutures that will fall out over the next month or so. Your child may have a removable dental splint over the repair as well. This splint should be worn at all times, especially while eating. Rinse the splint with warm water after meals. Clean the splint twice daily as recommended by your Orthodontist.
- You should ask your child to rinse their mouth out with water after each meal to clean the area of food debris. Your child will also have a medicated mouthwash to use for 7 days after surgery 3 times a day.
- No tooth brushing for one week after surgery- during this time you will count on good rinsing to keep the mouth clean. After a week it is OK to gently brush the teeth with a soft bristled toothbrush. Either the parent should brush or the child should brush under direct supervision.

## Follow-up

- Please make a clinic appointment for 2 weeks after surgery.
- After this visit, you will likely be seen again in about 2 months.
- When to call your child's doctor or nurse

If your child:

- has separation of the suture line in the mouth;
  - has a fever higher than 101.5°F degrees;
  - has pain that doesn't get better after pain medicine is given;
  - is not drinking liquids or is vomiting;
  - has trouble breathing.
- If you have any questions or concerns, call the office at (585)-275-1000 and someone will assist you.