



Alveolar Bone Graft: Home Care Instructions

General Information

It is important to protect the incisions on the alveolus (gum) from injury while they are healing. Complete healing will take approximately six weeks. For questions you may call your surgeons office during regular business hours:

1. Plastics and Reconstructive Surgery Office, 720-777-6409.
2. ENT Office, 720-777-5630.

Diet

Your child should start with a full liquid, pureed diet or pourable liquid diet for 2-3 weeks, depending on surgeon preference. You may advance the diet as directed. Your child should avoid foods that are hard to chew or sticky foods or such as caramel, taffy, gum, hard pretzels. In addition avoid spicy or food with seeds. This diet may need to be followed for up to 6 weeks post operatively.

Bone Morphogenic Protein (BMP)

If BMP (bone morphogenic protein) was used to correct the cleft of the alveolar ridge, it is not unusual for there to be significant swelling of the upper lip and cheek 48-72 hours following surgery. The swelling may remain up to a week after surgery. This is part of the normal healing process. If there is redness, increased tenderness that is not relieved by the prescribed pain medication, or fever greater than 101 please call.

Iliac Crest Donor Site (Wound Care)

If bone from the hip was used to correct the cleft of the alveolar ridge; you may expect swelling to the upper lip and cheek for 48-72 hours after surgery.

Your child may shower after 48 hours. Prior to that time, she/he should sponge bathe only and keep the donor site dressing dry and intact.

The outer dressing may be removed after 48 hours (at the time of the first shower) and you do not need to replace that dressing. Please leave the steri-strips intact at the donor site and allow them to fall off on their own.

Bruising at the donor site is expected and normal. It should resolve in 10 to 14 days.

Oral Hygiene

1. No straws
2. No tooth brushing at the bone graft site for 6 weeks.
3. Oral rinses with ½ strength mouth wash after any oral intake and at bedtime; then swish with water. Please rinse a minimum of four times a day. (Do not use Listerine or any other alcohol based mouthwash.) Chlorhexadine solution may be prescribed and needs to be used 4 times daily.

Activity Restrictions

1. No nose blowing.
2. You may want to elevate the head of the bed at home for 48-72 hours when your child sleeps to help with facial swelling. This is less effective with BMP grafts.
3. You may use an ice pack to the bone graft or donor site to help with discomfort for those children with an iliac crest donor/graft. Do not use the pack for more than 20 minutes at a time.
4. No contact sports for 6 weeks.

Medications

1. Pain Medications: Your child will be sent home with Tylenol or Tylenol with Codeine for pain. After 72 hours, you may give Ibuprofen (Motrin) for pain relief instead of Tylenol if desired. If the medications do not provide pain relief, call your doctor.
2. Antibiotic: Your child will be on an oral antibiotic for 7 to 10 days. Take all the antibiotic as ordered. If your child is having nausea or diarrhea from the antibiotic, please call your doctor.

Things to watch for

Notify your child's surgeon or pediatrician for the following:

- fever greater than 101° F
- bleeding at the donor or graft site that soaks a wash cloth in 1-2 hours
- foul smelling discharge from the mouth
- breathing problems
- for iliac crest donor site: difficulty walking that does not improve within a week; significant hip pain not relieved by pain medications.

Follow-Up Appointment

___In Plastics Clinic in 3 weeks, please call to make an appointment 720-777-6182.

___In ENT Clinic in 2 weeks, please call to make an appointment 720-777-8501.

A panorex film will be needed 6-12 weeks following surgery to evaluate bone growth; this will also include a follow up appointment with your child's surgeon.

