

Soft Tissue Grafting

Box text: Are you suffering from gum recession? Relieve tooth sensitivity and bone damage with a soft tissue graft.

What is soft tissue grafting?

Have you ever been told that you have a receding gum line? Well, don't worry! It's a common affliction that affects 4%-12% of adults. Even with regular dental care, you may need a soft tissue graft for gum recession at some point. And there are many reasons you may need one, including some that are out of your control. From diabetes and hormone changes to your family history, your determinant for a gum graft will depend on your specific issue.

You might not even notice your gums are receding because it's a gradual process. Gum recession occurs when the gum surrounding the teeth parts away from a tooth, leaving it exposed. The condition can cause supporting bone damage, with severe issues resulting in tooth sensitivity or loss.

Types of gum tissue grafts

There are three types of gum tissue grafts. Keep in mind, the one chosen by your dentist will be according to your dental needs. The type of grafts are:

Connective tissue grafts: This tissue graft is the most common type used if there are many areas of gum recession to mend. Your dentist will create a flap in the roof of your mouth and take underlying connective tissue to stitch over the exposed roots.

Free gingival grafts: It's similar to a connective tissue graft. If you're dealing with weak gum tissue that needs strengthening, then this may be another option. Your dentist will take a small piece of tissue from your palate and attach it to the existing gum line around the affected tooth. Another alternative would be for your dentist to use freeze-dried human tissue from another originator or tissue bank. Dentists practice this technique to avoid having two surgical sites or when a large amount of tissue is needed.

Pedicle grafts: Lastly, a pedicle graft uses gum tissue next to the tooth's exposed root. This procedure is only possible if the surrounding gum tissue is thick and healthy. A small piece of tissue will be cut and positioned over the affected roots.

Gum Tissue Grafts Postoperative Care

After the procedure, you will be able to return home. If your dentist didn't remove any tissue during the grafting procedure, you would have little to no painful sensations. However, you can expect to feel a little uncomfortable for a few days if you have. Not to worry, thankfully, it tends to heal quickly.

Your dentist will prescribe prescription pain medication if required or over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication to assist with the pain.

Here are a few things you can do to aid with the healing process:

- Avoid physical activity for the first twenty-four hours after surgery.
- Do not pull or tug on your lip to look at the wound. Keep your tongue from touching the area, and don't remove the dressing.
- Do not brush or rinse your mouth the day of the surgery.
- Kill bacteria with a mouth rinse after the first twenty-four hours post-surgery.
- Do not eat any hot food or drinks for a couple of days. Soft foods and liquids are best. As you slowly return to your regular diet, be mindful of chewing near the surgery site.
- Upon returning to regular teeth-brushing, keep away from the grafting area for about a month. After the time passes, use a soft toothbrush with gentle movements.

If you have questions about soft tissue grafting, contact our office today. We're only **a phone call away** – (780)-429-2112.
