

If you experience problems that aren't solved by these suggestions, please call the surgery. We may be able to help by painting special medicaments onto the sensitive roots.

F. Bonjela or SM33 - To be comfortable while eating (especially with acidic or spicy foods), use **Bonjela or SM33** (from the pharmacy) which numbs the raw surface of the gum. Anything that works on ulcers or on children's teething pains will also work on your gum.

Finally, remember to see either the dentist or hygienist RELIGIOUSLY every 6 months (or more often as discussed with you) for such things as calculus removal, checking of pocket infections and the presence of sticky exudates or pus, measurement of your pockets from time to time and keeping on top of this insidious infection. Although the surgery works, it is not a panacea and the fact that you needed it shows that your other teeth need frequent checking. If you have the PST gene you should be doubly attentive to the condition of your gums, but do not get too depressed if despite your best efforts there is constant deterioration over the years. For those without the PST gene, this sort of surgery, combined with aggressive home bacteria removal with the right tools, regular 6 monthly assessment, ultrasonic cleaning of the roots and hand scaling of problem areas, will probably make the difference between having strong, solid pain-free teeth to chew with later in life and having nothing of your own to chew with. Clearly, a preventive philosophy will yield a better long term result.

This document has been produced for the international dental profession. The English (US) dictionary has been used as the basis for the text.

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Instructions Following Gingivectomy

1. Expect the gum to feel different

The gum tissue has been removed in order to give you access to the site of the painless infection that was slowly destroying your teeth. You now have access to get your brush bristles right to the site of infection and neutralize it by brushing away the bacteria in the plaque. **Don't worry about brushing it in the first 2 weeks if it is too sore, but make sure you start after that. If you don't use the surgical access we have created to get the special 'interdental' brush into the site, having the surgery is pointless.**

The dent in your gum will not feel as obvious in about 4 weeks, because it will regrow about 30% and smooth over, so don't be concerned if it feels quite strange now. Bear in mind it would feel even stranger if you lost the whole tooth, which is where the infection would have taken you, (and still may, depending on the severity of the infection and your future cleaning habits).

2. Your new 'smart' brush

For the rest of your life you will need to use an **interdental brush** at least once, preferably twice, a day, in the hole or holes we have made for you. This is because normal brushes just don't have the ability to get in there properly. These interdental brushes can be obtained from us in 8 sizes, each one a different colour. Feel free to experiment to find the biggest size you can get in there. The bigger the size the more friction on the gum, the more plaque it removes and the better it suppresses the regrowth of the gum. You can also buy similar brushes from the pharmacy, but not in a range of sizes. Don't expect any of these brushes to last as long as a normal tooth brush - they wear out in 3 to 7 days generally. Also, don't ram it into the hole or you will bend the wire. Start by wriggling it in a circular fashion as you apply gentle pressure and you will find it goes in easily without buckling. After insertion push it across so you can feel it come out the other side. You only need to go back and forth 5 times - it's simple and easy to do. Keep it on the bathroom bench next to your normal toothbrush, not hidden away somewhere in a drawer. Whatever is easy to do, you are more likely to do.

3. Pain Control

People vary widely in their response to this type of surgery. About 50% report that they have no or negligible pain. It is rare for it to hurt substantially, but if it does please call, because you may need antibiotics. If you feel nauseous and feverish you definitely need antibiotics. Get these from any medical centre if you can't contact us. Pain varies with your state of mind, positive or negative and the way you were brought up to react to pain, social or otherwise. Pain also varies with the size of the surgical wound, which in turn corresponds with the severity of

your problem. So if it hurts mildly keep thinking "I have had an active, insidious and significant disease threatening the existence of my teeth and I'm glad somebody has found it and is stopping it getting worse". It will take about 2 weeks for the worst of the painful period to be over, but don't expect it to be completely normal for about 4 weeks. Up until now, the pain story sounded negative, but you will be glad to know that there are some wonderful medicaments that make a significant difference:

A. Rinse with Difflam-C

Very important: Rinse every 1.5 hours while awake for 2-3 days after the procedure. Reduce the frequency of rinsing to 3-4 times per day for the next 2-3 weeks or until the pain goes away.

- We have given you a bottle of Difflam-C
- Please purchase a bottle at the pharmacy

B. Apply Kenalog in Orabase

This is a gel that creates an anti-inflammatory "skin" on the gum. Apply according to instructions on the packet. You can purchase this from your local pharmacy.

C. Take pain killers as required

Start with **Panadol**, but if this is not adequate, try **Panadeine** (unless you are allergic to codeine). If this is still not stopping the pain, please call us and we will prescribe something stronger. If we anticipate strong pain, we may give you **Dolobid** (2 tablets to be taken every 12 hours) or **Panadeine Forte** (2 tablets to be taken every 4-6 hours, a maximum of 8 tablets per 24 hours).

D. Use an interdental brush as soon as you can

The area may be tender and some blood may ooze out, but don't be concerned. It is desirable but not essential to use the brush in the healing period as it helps keep the blood clot brushed away so the gum does not re-grow excessively.

E. If you experience sensitivity to hot, or more particularly cold, use:

Sensodyne F toothpaste – apply and leave to dissolve. Buy from pharmacy.

Tooth Mousse – apply with finger or brush on to teeth and into the gap at bedtime and leave to dissolve. It is safe to swallow. Please call if you need this.

Because the gum has been removed over the sensitive root it is normal to get a reaction to cold, but it nearly always self corrects after a couple of months, and causes no problem other than the annoyance.

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