

Commonly Asked Questions:

Q: How long does a gingival graft procedure take?

A: The visit to perform a gingival graft is about 45-60 minutes long. The stitches are removed approximately one week later in a 5-10 minute visit. One or two 10 minute check-ups may be scheduled to ensure the area has healed correctly.

Q: Will the gingival graft procedure hurt?

A: Only “novocaine” is necessary to perform a gingival graft. During the visit you will feel nothing once the area has been numbed. When the “novocaine” wears off, there will be some mild discomfort. Medication will be prescribed to control any discomfort you might experience. This procedure will not cause you to miss work, etc.

Q: What is the cost of a gingival graft?

A: The cost of a gingival graft will vary with the situation. However, your periodontist will ensure this is discussed with you thoroughly before proceeding with any treatment.

Q: How well will the gingival graft procedure work?

A: A gingival graft procedure is highly predictable. If the procedure is carried out correctly, the end result is a healthy stable band of attached gum tissue which reseals and protects the tooth and underlying bone.

**Remember, if you have any questions
ask your periodontist.**

Gingival Graft

In health, a tooth is surrounded by two types of tissue. The first is gingiva (gum), which is pink in color and thick and dense under a microscope. Gingiva forms a tight seal around the tooth which serves as a barrier against the penetration of bacteria to the underlying supporting bone. The gingiva also helps to withstand trauma from brushing, eating, etc.

The other type of tissue, mucosa, found directly below gingiva, is red, very thin and appears loose under a microscope. It does not seal tightly around the tooth, nor does it withstand trauma well (as shown by how easily you can “scrape” the floor of the mouth).



When recession of the gingiva occurs, the body loses a natural defense against both bacterial penetration and trauma. When there is only minor recession, some healthy gingiva often remains and protects the tooth, so that no treatment other than modifying home care practices is necessary.

However, when recession reaches the mucosa, the first line of defense against bacterial penetration is lost.

No matter how meticulously the patient tries to control the bacteria, there is a greater chance of it penetrating and affecting the underlying supporting bone around the tooth.

In addition, gum recession often results in root sensitivity to hot and cold foods as well as an unsightly appearance to the gum and tooth.



A gingival graft is designed to solve these problems. A thin piece of tissue is taken from the roof of the mouth, or gently moved over from adjacent areas, to provide a stable band of attached gingiva around the tooth.

The gingival graft may be placed in such a way as to cover the exposed portion of the root.

The gingival graft procedure is highly predictable, and results in a stable healthy band of attached tissue around the tooth.