



Periodontal Implant Center



Gingival Recession Fact Sheet

Gingival recession = A combination of gum loss and underlying lack/loss of alveolar bone

Causes of gum recession:

- Inflammation
- Trauma
- Thin Tissue Biotype – Lack of Attached Gingiva
- Lack of Alveolar Bone Thickness
- Labially Positioned Teeth
- Orthodontic Arch Expansion / Facial Tooth Movement
- Frenum Pull
- Smoking / Smokeless tobacco
- Occlusal Trauma
- Cervical Decay
- Violation of Biologic Width by Subgingival Restoration

When should tissue grafting be considered?

Root Coverage Grafting

- Esthetic complaint due to root exposure
- Thermal sensitivity due to root exposure
- Gingival recession greater than 4mm
- Shallow cervical root caries
- At least 1mm remaining attached gingiva

Pinhole Technique™

- Esthetic complaint due to root exposure
- Thermal sensitivity due to root exposure
- Gingival Recession less than 4mm
- Shallow cervical root caries
- At least 1mm remaining attached gingiva
- Minimal papilla loss

Gingival Grafting

- Lack of Attached Gingiva / Mucogingival Defect with associated inflammation or tenderness
- Gingival recession greater than 4mm and less than 1mm of remaining attached gingiva
- Frenum insertion less than 2mm from gingival margin with progressive loss of attachment or chronic inflammation
- Orthodontic considerations / planned arch expansion and \leq 1mm of attached gingiva
- Teeth with subgingival restorative margins that extend beyond the mucogingival junction

Requirements for grafting to achieve complete root coverage:

- 1) No interproximal bone loss / No papilla loss
- 2) At least 1mm of remaining attached gingiva

When is palatal donor tissue required (*donor allograft or pinhole technique are not an option*)?

- 1) If there is complete loss of attached gingiva / mucogingival defects
- 2) Patient is a smoker

How long is a gum grafting surgery? 1 site = 30-45 minutes, 1 arch = 90-120 minutes

Is sedation required? No, sedation is optional but not required.

Is the procedure painful? No, local anesthetic prevents any discomfort during the procedure.

What is the minimum age for tissue grafting procedures? Age 7, with partial eruption of the permanent lower incisors.

How long does it take for the palate to heal? For gingival grafting, donor site heals at a rate of 0.5mm per day – usually takes 3 weeks to completely heal. For connective tissue grafting, the wound heals rapidly within 10 days.

Does a graft from the palate leave a depression or a scar long term? No, complete regeneration of the harvested tissue is expected with no scarring.

Can gum grafts be placed around implants? Yes, with similar predictability as grafts around natural teeth.

Do gum grafts attach to the root? Or create pockets? Gum grafts attach strongly and securely to root surfaces and do not create periodontal pockets.

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