

**FRENULOPLASTY POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS** - adapted from the *Breathe Institute literature*.

*After the surgery:*

Patients should expect some mild swelling, pain, and/or discomfort as a normal process of wound healing. Pain is often controlled with over-the-counter pain medications, and other symptoms usually self-resolve over the course of 1-2 weeks with proper rest and myofunctional therapy. Possible (but very rare) complications of a frenuloplasty may include bleeding, prolonged pain, numbness, failure of procedure, scarring, and injury to adjacent structures which may result in salivary gland dysfunction.

Immediately after the surgery:

1. **Bleeding:** it is normal to experience some bloody oozing during the first 1-2 days. If study bleeding occurs, place gauze under the tongue to hold pressure and call Dr. Santiago, or go to your local ER.
2. **Swelling and Inflammation:** It is normal to experience some swelling and inflammation in the first 3-5 days after surgery. Your tongue may feel larger than usual and more painful to move. We recommend using Tylenol or Ibuprofen as needed for pain. We also recommend holistic options such as arnica, tumeric, ginger, and CBD oil. Patients who are more sensitive to pain may benefit from narcotic pain medications such as Tramadol.
3. **Wound Care:** You will be provided with topical analgesic gel and gauze. You may apply a pea-size of gel to the gauze, place on the surgical site, and replace as needed every 1-2 hours, up to 4 times daily.
4. **Oral Hygiene:** Please continue brushing teeth as usual. We recommend very *gingerly* rinsing with salt water or the provided mouthwash several times a day to keep the wound clean and reduce the risk of infection.
5. **Food/Drink:** During the first few days, you may find it helpful to have soft, cool foods. It is advised to avoid hot or spicy foods, or foods that require a lot of chewing. Also avoid foods with seeds or popcorn.
6. **Sutures:** We use absorbable sutures that will usually fall off or dissolve on their own within 3-5 days and sometimes anywhere from 1-10 days after surgery. As the sutures fall out, granulation healing tissue will fill the open wounds. If the granulation tissue overgrows the wound, we recommend gently brushing the surgical site with the post-surgical toothbrush that has been provided for you. It is not necessary to remove the granulation tissue. As the granulation tissue heals, the tissue will begin to contract by around day 5-7. This is when the myofunctional therapy exercises become the most important.
7. **Myofunctional Therapy Exercises:** We recommend that you rest for the first days after your procedure and focus on minimizing your pain. Once the pain is well-controlled, we encourage you to do light movements with your tongue by sticking it up to the front teeth with your mouth wide open, side to side inside the cheek, around the teeth, and suction hold. Avoid sticking your tongue out during the first 5-7 days and begin these more advance exercises only once you have been cleared by your myofunctional therapist. It is extremely important to perform the stretches and exercise as prescribed by your therapist to obtain the most optimal results.
8. **Wound Stretches:** Wound stretches are only recommended for wounds that are left open to heal by secondary intention, or if the patient is unable to comply with the myofunctional therapy exercises with maximum efficacy due to pain or contraction. Wound stretches involve wrapping the tongue in a paper towel or gauze and pulling the tongue outwards, downwards, upwards, and to each side, to feel a stretch for 10 second holds.
9. **Lip and Buccal Ties:** We recommend that you take it easy for the first few days. Afterwards, run your tongue around real vestibule several times a day. We also recommend air puffs. After one week, you can do lift stretching and manual intra-oral massage.
10. **Physical Therapy:** Many patients benefit from fascia physical therapy, craniosacral therapy, osteopathic manipulation, and other forms of physical therapy post-operatively depending on the clinical circumstance.

At any time, call our practice if you experience any of the following: Severe pain that does not improve with medication, brisk bleeding, severe swelling at the surgery site, difficulty breathing, or fever higher than 102 degrees F.