



Orange County
Pediatric Dentistry
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Frenectomy – Post Operative Instructions

It is normal for swelling to occur in the lasered areas. This will usually go down after about a day and a half.

The child can be sore in the afternoon and evening following the procedure. This is normal and will subside. You may use **Ibuprophen** or **Acetaminophen** if necessary.

A small amount of spotting or bleeding is common after the procedure, especially in the first few days. Because a laser is being used, bleeding is minimized. If the lip is bumped, the area may bleed again. Just apply pressure to the area to stop the bleeding with the gauze provided. Make sure it is slightly damp, rather than dry, to avoid tearing the healing wound and skin.

Starting several days after the procedure, the wound will look white and/or yellow similar to pus. This is a normal inflammatory response. If by chance you are worried and think it's an infection, give our office a call.

STRETCHES

Post-procedure **stretches** are **key** to getting an optimal result. These stretches are NOT meant to be forceful or prolonged. It's best to be quick and precise with your movements. Make sure you have enough lighting to visualize the areas.

The main risk of a frenectomy is that the mouth heals so quickly that it may prematurely reattach at either the tongue site or the lip site, causing a new limitation in mobility and the persistence or return of symptoms. The exercises are best done with the child placed in your lap with the feet going away from you.

- Wash your hands well prior to your stretches (gloves are ok but not necessary).
- You can dampen your finger with water.
- Begin stretches tonight.
- Do stretches **3 times per day for 3 weeks.**
- The stretching process should not take more than 30 seconds per frenectomy site.
- For the lip: Lift the lip up to full extension with mild to moderate force.
- For the tongue: Lift the tongue up from the sides to the full extension with moderate force.
- **Quality stretches are key**

Lip Stretches

For the upper lip, place your index fingers on the corners of the diamond and lift the lip up as high as it will go. Hold it for 3 seconds. Do those 5 times. Next simply place your finger under the lip and move it up as high as it will go (until it bumps into resistance). Then gently sweep on the wound up/down and side to side for 5 seconds.

Remember, the main goal of this procedure is to insert your finger between the raw, opposing surfaces of the lip and the gum so they can't stick together.

Tongue Stretches

Insert both index fingers into the mouth (insert one in the mouth and go towards the cheek to stretch out the mouth, making room for your other index finger). Then use both index fingers to dive under the tongue and pick it up, towards the roof of the child's mouth. The tongue needs three separate stretching motions:

- Place your fingers near the corners of the diamond under the tongue. Then push back and lift up as high as it will go (towards the roof of the mouth). Try and keep your fingers together to prevent them from being too wide. Hold it there for 3 seconds and then relax. Do that 5 times. The goal is to completely unfold the diamond so that it's almost flat in orientation (remember, the fold of the diamond across the middle is the first place it will reattach).
- With one finger propping up the tongue, place your other finger in the middle of the diamond and turn your finger sideways and use a lifting motion from front to back to try and keep the diamond as deep as possible. Use a lifting motion when you gently sweep through the diamond, trying to separate the horizontal fold across that diamond. Make sure your finger starts within the diamond when doing this stretch. Your finger will be on the actual wound itself. Do 5 finger sweeps
- Massage on either side of the diamond (outside the diamond) to loosen up the musculature of the remainder of the floor of mouth. You can use more pressure when doing these stretches because you aren't in the wound at this point



Example of a PROPER STRETCH



Example of an IMPROPER STRETCH

Do you see how the fingers are away from the diamond? As these fingers lift up the tongue, too much of that force is directed at the sides of the tongue, and the middle portion is still pinned down. This will lead to reattachment. Focus on getting your index fingers mentally glued together - this forces you to stay in the middle, right on top of the diamond (like the correct picture illustrated above). As you push into the diamond and then lift the tongue up, the top half of the diamond will ideally come away from the bottom half of the diamond. It is attention to separating the fold across the diamond that results in a successful post-operative stretching regimen.

[If you have any questions, please call us at 845-928-2205](tel:845-928-2205)