

Alveolar Grafting for the Young (5-6 y.o.) Unilateral and Bilateral Cleft Palate Patient?

Sanford L. Ratner, DDS, FACS
USA

Timing of surgical correction of cleft lip and palate deformities has been standardized, with routine closure of the lip at 10 weeks, the palate at 18-24 months and the alveolus at 9 years. The standards for lip and palate repair coincide with weight and physiologic development of the child while timing of the alveolar grafting has been set to coincide with the eruption sequence of the maxillary canine teeth. A plethora of time frames for the closure of alveolar fistula has been reported in the literature. These include primary, early, early secondary, secondary, and late (secondary). This discussion will present the argument in favor of early secondary repair. Timing and indications for early repair, along with surgical technique will be discussed, and related to 32 years of utilizing early secondary repair by one surgeon.