

Post-Operative Instructions

Post-operative care is very important. Unnecessary pain and the complications of infection and swelling can be minimized if the instructions are followed carefully. A responsible person should carefully attend patients who have undergone sedation for at least eight hours following surgery. **THE PATIENT IS NOT PERMITTED TO DRIVE FOR 24HRS AFTER SURGERY.** For EMERGENCIES please call (919)-841-1720 to get the phone number of your doctor on-call.

Bleeding: A certain amount of bleeding is to be expected following surgery. Slight bleeding, oozing, or redness in the saliva is not uncommon. Bleeding may be controlled by placing a gauze pad over the area and biting firmly for sixty minutes. Repeat if necessary. If bleeding continues, bite on a moistened, squeeze dried tea bag for sixty minutes, repeat as necessary. The tannic acid in the tea bag helps to form a clot by contracting bleeding vessels. To minimize further bleeding, sit upright, avoid exercise and do not become overly excited. If bleeding does not subside, please call for further instructions.

- **DO NOT** smoke for a period of one month. Puffing on cigarettes tend to dislodge the blood clot and prolongs bleeding. Nicotine also directly delays healing. **THIS IS EXTREMELY CRITICAL.**
- **NO SPITTING, RINSING, OR SUCKING on a straw** for 24hrs following surgery. This tends to dislodge the blood clot and prolong bleeding.

Diet: Avoid hot beverages/foods on the day of surgery which can unintentionally burn your mouth while it is still numb. Cool or warm, soft foods such as yogurt, applesauce, ice cream, juice, scrambled eggs, mashed potatoes, or warm soups are ideal on the day of surgery and during the first few post-operative days. Over the next several days you may gradually progress to more solid food at your own pace. **If you had bone grafting procedure done, please avoid carbonated or acidic foods/beverages for 2 weeks after surgery to avoid the sutures from dissolving too quickly.**

Swelling: Swelling and bruising is not uncommon after oral surgery. Ice is most helpful during the first 24 hours. After 72 hours, ice has no beneficial effect. If swelling or jaw stiffness persists for several days, there is no cause for alarm; this is a normal reaction to surgery. Swelling will usually reach its peak approximately 72 hours after surgery; then it will begin to slowly improve. If there is no improvement please call the office for further instructions.

Hygiene: The surgical area should always be kept clean. You may brush your teeth the day after surgery but be gentle around the surgical area. It is very important to brush two to three times daily to decrease the bacterial load. The day after your surgery use the prescribed mouth rinse after every meal for ten days. Full instructions will be found on the bottle. ***For wisdom teeth extractions: two days after surgery, start irrigating the lower sockets ONLY, with the syringe provided after every meal for one week. Put the very tip of the curved syringe gently in the socket and use the syringe to release Peridex in the socket.***

Sutures: Sutures are placed in the area to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing. If you have sutures (stitches) they will dissolve on their own. If the sutures become dislodged, this is no cause for alarm, just remove the suture from your mouth gently and discard it.

Numbness: Following the removal of teeth of the lower jaw, a small percentage of patients will experience numbness of the lower lip and tongue. The nerve involved provides feeling sensations only and has no effect of eating, talking, or your appearance. If numbness does occur, it is more often felt as a minor annoyance and usually disappears with normal healing.

Exercise: You should avoid strenuous exercise for 4 days after surgery.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MEDICATIONS AFTER SURGERY:

Antibiotics: (several different types exist) please take as directed on the prescription.

Peridex: mouth rinse is a germicidal mouthwash that reduces bacteria in the mouth. Mix a ½ cap full of the rinse with ½ cap full of water, rinse for 30 seconds and spit. Start this rinse the day after surgery.

Pain Medication: take as necessary and directed on the prescription.

Medrol Dose Pack: medication designed to decrease inflammation after surgery. This medication is prescribed in a tapered dose manner. All 6 of the tablets for day 1 that can be taken all at once after your procedure. You will follow the instructions for days 2-6 as noted in the prescription card inside the box.

Zofran or Phenergan: common anti-nausea medications. Please take as necessary and prescribed.