

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

*** PLEASE READ BOTH SIDES OF THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY ***

Sometimes the after-effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all instructions will be applicable to each patient. Common sense will often dictate what you should do. However, when in doubt follow these guidelines or call our office for clarification. Our number is: **704-892-1198**

FIRST HOUR:

- Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas for *at least 1 hour*, making sure they remain in place. Replace gauze if it becomes saturated due to bleeding.
 - See instructions below for persistent bleeding.

EXERCISE CARE:

- Do not disturb the surgical area today. You may brush your teeth gently, but **DO NOT RINSE VIGOROUSLY** or probe the area with any objects.
- It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required, to confine the first day's intake to liquids or pureed foods (soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.) **DO NOT DRINK THROUGH A STRAW.**
- **PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE for at least 5 days.** This is very detrimental to healing and may cause a dry socket.

PERSISTENT BLEEDING & OOZING:

- Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal.
- Bleeding may be controlled by placing fresh gauze over the areas and biting on the gauze for 30-45 minutes at a time.
 - Moisten gauze with tap water and loosely fluff for more comfortable positioning.
 - Typically by bedtime on the day of your surgery the bleeding should be minimal enough to discontinue gauze.
- *Bleeding should never be severe.*
 - If so, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between teeth only and are not exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning the packs.
- **If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a tea bag** (soaked in cold water, squeezed damp-dry and wrapped in moist gauze) **for 20-30 minutes.** If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

SWELLING:

- Swelling is often associated with oral surgery.
- Minimize swelling by using a cold pack, ice bag or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek adjacent to the surgical area.
 - **Apply ice 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off during the first 2-3 days post-surgery.**
- Swelling will gradually increase and peak around day 3 post-surgery. Swelling will then begin to subside.

PAIN:

- Unfortunately most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication.
- **We suggest taking the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off** (about 4-6 hours after surgery) as this will allow you to pro-actively manage the pain.
- The most severe pain is usually within six hours after the local anesthetic wears off; after that your need for medicine should lessen.
- **It is not advisable to take the prescription pain medication at more frequent intervals than the instructions on the bottle. If you are not able to manage the pain based on the prescription instructions, please contact our office.**

NAUSEA:

- Nausea is not uncommon after surgery; sometimes pain medications are the cause.
 - Precede each pain pill with a small amount of soft food and a large glass of water.
 - Continue drinking clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications.
 - Call our office if nausea persists.

DIET:

- You may eat whatever you can tolerate; however, avoid extremely hot foods, and foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, chips, etc., which may get lodged in the socket areas.
- **DO NOT USE A STRAW FOR THE FIRST 4-5 DAYS AFTER SURGERY.**
- It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster.
- If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

SHARP EDGES:

- If you feel something hard or sharp edges in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling the bony walls which once supported the extracted teeth.
- Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call our office.

MOUTH RINSES:

- **Days 1 & 2:** Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use 1/4 teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water and **gently** rinse with portions of the solution, taking five minutes to use the entire glassful. Repeat as often as you like, but at least two or three times daily.
- **On the 3rd day:** Begin using the syringe daily to gently flush the areas until the socket is completely closed, using the same saline solution.

WHEN COUNTING DAYS CONSIDER THE DAY OF SURGERY TO BE 'DAY ZERO.'
FOR EXAMPLE: IF YOUR PROCEDURE IS MONDAY THE THIRD DAY WOULD BE THURSDAY.

BRUSHING:

- Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery.
- Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

HEALING:

- The first two to three days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and swelling is expected and normal.
- On the third day you should be more comfortable and, although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet. Your swelling will begin to subside by the fourth day.
- **The remainder of the post-operative course should be gradual, steady improvement.** If you don't experience continued improvement, please call our office.

IT IS OUR DESIRE THAT YOUR RECOVERY BE AS SMOOTH AND PLEASANT AS POSSIBLE. If you have questions about your progress, please call our office.

A 24-hour answering service is available to contact the doctor on call after hours for **emergency situations only**.

Non-emergent questions/concerns should be addressed during office hours. If you have surgical complications and need to be seen on a Friday please call by 10am as we close at 1:00pm.

Please Note: NARCOTIC PAIN KILLERS CAN NO LONGER BE CALLED IN TO YOUR PHARMACY
(You must call during office hours to pick-up narcotic prescription refills)

Normal Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 8-5 and Fridays 8-1 704-892-1198