

POST-OP SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

BLEEDING: Slight bleeding after surgery is not unusual. Your saliva may be tinged with blood for up to 24 hours. In some situations, gauze will be placed over the site after surgery; leave that gauze over the surgery site for at least two (2) hours and maintain firm biting pressure. Do not forcefully spit or irritate the surgery site as this may cause further bleeding. If bleeding persists, it may be controlled with pressure (moisten a clean gauze and place directly over the surgery site, apply moderate biting pressure for approximately ½ hour, repeating if necessary). Note: Sinus bone graft patients may experience bleeding through the nose for up to 24 hours after surgery.

PAIN: It is not uncommon to have discomfort and pain for the first few days after surgery. Take pain medications as needed. The first day it is recommended to take medication even with minimal pain as it is easier to prevent pain than decrease it. Pain medications are most effective when taken before local anesthesia diminishes and normal sensation returns. Do not take pain medication on an empty stomach. Narcotic pain medication such as codeine, oxycodone, or hydrocodone may cause nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, dizziness, itching or constipation. If these side effects occur, discontinue the medication. You may take an alternative over-the-counter pain medication as necessary or call our office for assistance. Note: Narcotics can be supplemented with Ibuprofen (approximately 600 mg) or Extra-Strength Tylenol (approximately 500 mg), if added pain relief is needed.

SWELLING: After surgery, swelling around the mouth, cheeks, eyes, and side of face is very common. This is the body's normal reaction to surgery and eventual repair. Swelling usually will not become apparent until the day following surgery and will not reach its maximum until two to three (2-3) days post-operative. However, the swelling may be minimized by the immediate use of ice packs. Apply an ice pack to the outside of your face over the surgery site for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for the first 24 hours. Prepare several cold packs by placing damp washcloths in small zip lock freezer bags. After 24 hours, moist heat can be applied to the area as ice will increase swelling. Sleeping with your head elevated above the level of the heart for the first two to three (2-3) post-operative nights tends to lessen swelling.

BRUISING: Bruising is also very common after surgery. Bruising may be present over the surgery site and various areas of the face and neck. The development of black, blue, green, or yellow discoloration is due to blood spreading beneath the tissues. This is a normal post-operative occurrence, which may occur two to three (2-3) days after surgery and last up to 14 days. Moist heat applied to the area may speed up the removal of the discoloration.

NAUSEA: Nausea may result from anesthesia medications, or the drugs prescribed for pain. To minimize this possibility, avoid taking any medications on an empty stomach. Take all medications with a small amount of food. If you feel nauseated drink clear liquids such as ginger ale, 7-Up, apple juice, broth or try eating toast and/or crackers.

DIET: After surgery, drink lots of clear liquids and eat soft, nutritious foods. Avoid acidic foods such as tomatoes, orange juice, and citrus fruits until the surgery site has healed (2 weeks). Do not drink through a straw for at least 48 hours. If you had surgery on only one side of your mouth, favor the other side while chewing for the first few days.

ORAL HYGIENE: Hygiene should not be neglected as an accumulation of food and debris may promote inflammation and/or infection. You may rinse and brush your teeth starting the day after surgery. Brush your teeth as usual, and do not brush the surgical area for four to five (4-5) days. Chlorhexidine mouth rinse can also be used with non-vigorous rinsing.

ACTIVITY: Limit strenuous activity for the first two to three (2-3) days after surgery. This will reduce bleeding and minimize swelling. Strenuous work or exercise may promote bleeding and increase swelling, which may be damaging to the surgery site and delay healing.

FEVER: After surgery, it is normal for the body temperature to be slightly elevated for 24 hours. Please remember to drink sufficient amounts of clear liquids to keep your body hydrated. Contact the office if there is a high temperature or if a low-grade temperature persists after the first 24 hours.

SMOKING / ALCOHOL: Smoking and alcohol use will delay healing and predisposes you to infection, which can result in the failure of the implant or bone graft. This will result in possible surgical intervention, delay in treatment, and possible loss of implant/bone graft. **Do not smoke (nicotine products) or use alcohol until the incision line is completely healed (approximately 2 weeks).**

SUTURES: Sutures are placed in the area of surgery to minimize post-operative bleeding and to help healing. Sometimes they become dislodged, this is no cause for alarm. In most cases these sutures are dissolvable and should disappear on their own in approximately 7-14 days. If they are still present our office will remove them on your post-op appointment.

MEDICATIONS: It is very important that you take all your prescribed medications from your physician as prescribed. **DO NOT DISCONTINUE ANY MEDICATIONS (especially blood thinners) UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO BY YOUR PHYSICIAN.** Additionally, take all medications that our office prescribes for you. Each medication has a specific role in the post-operative period of your surgery, which will decrease the possibility of infection, swelling, and pain. Discontinue the antibiotic medication if a rash develops or if an upset stomach persists. Report this immediately to our office. Note: If you are currently taking birth control pills, be aware that taking antibiotics will decrease the effectiveness of those pills and alternative birth control methods should be utilized.

WEARING YOUR PROSTHESIS: Follow the specific doctor's instructions on the use of partial dentures, flippers, or full dentures after surgery. Excessive pressure on the surgical site may lead to complications or failure of the dental implants or bone grafts.

NUMBNESS: Be cautious until the anesthesia wears off as you may not have feeling in the soft tissues, and you may unknowingly injure yourself. After surgery you will have prolonged numbness in the surgical area. Care should be exercised in eating or drinking any hot fluids as you may cause injuries to the soft tissues. Ideally, eat and drink on the opposite side until the numbness subsides. If numbness persists after 24 hours, please contact our office.