# ORAL SURGERY POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

## 1. Pain Control

Discomfort can be significant for several days following oral surgery. If medication for pain has been prescribed, it will likely be needed and should be taken as directed. If significant discomfort persists or gets worse beyond 3 or 4 days, you should notify our office.

## 2. Antibiotics

If an antibiotic was prescribed for the prevention of an infection, it should be taken as directed **until finished**. If a problem develops or an allergy is suspected, stop taking the antibiotics immediately and contact our office. If you cannot contact our office and you have **urgent** concerns, please proceed to the nearest emergency department.

## 3. Bleeding Control

Some bleeding is to be expected during the first day after your surgery.

- Sit down and relax. Avoid activity that increases your heart rate.
- Place two folded pieces of gauze over the area and bite down firmly. Maintain firm, steady pressure for 30 minutes. Repeat as necessary.
- If bleeding is excessive or persists after 4 hours, place a moistened regular tea bag over the area and bite firmly for 30 minutes with constant pressure.
- If bleeding does not stop, contact the office.

## 4. Swelling, bruising and stiffness

- Swelling is to be expected following surgery. The degree of swelling can vary widely among patients.
- As a rule, swelling peaks at 48 hours and persists for 1-2 weeks.
- Use ice 10 minutes ON and 10 minutes OFF for the first 36 hours after surgery.
- Mild to moderate bruising may occur.
- Jaw stiffness and limited mouth opening can occur and may take 1-2 weeks to resolve.
- If new swelling occurs after the first 3 to 4 days, please call our office for guidance.

## 5. Stitches

For most routine surgery, dissolving stitches are used and will disappear within approximately 7 days. In cases where stitches need to be removed, you will be informed at the time of surgery and an appointment will be scheduled.

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## 6. Oral Hygiene

- **Do not** rinse, forcefully spit, use straws, or smoke for the first 24 hours. Spitting or sucking can dislodge your blood clots and cause complications.
- Smoking/Vaping can cause bleeding and delay healing. Smokers are advised not to smoke for 3 days following surgery. This includes cigarettes, vaping and marijuana.
- Begin gentle rinsing the following day. Rinse several times daily with warm salt water (1 tsp salt in glass of water) after eating and at bedtime.
- You can brush your other teeth the same day. Be very careful in the surgical areas and only use a very small amount of toothpaste.
- If you were provided with an irrigating syringe, begin using the syringe 4-7 days after surgery by inserting the tip directly into the lower sockets. Gently flush the socket after meals and at bedtime (4 times/day) using water, warm salt water or the provided mouth rinse.
- **Implant patients should dab the surgical area using a q-tip with the provided antibacterial rinse for 2-3 weeks.**

## 7. Food

- Proper nutrition is important for healing as well as for your general health.
- Make sure to drink plenty of liquids.
- **Do not** use straws for 3-4 days after your surgery. The suction can cause more bleeding by dislodging the blood clot and increase the chance of complications such as a dry socket.
- Avoid eating any foods with small seeds such as poppy, sesame, chia and berry seeds as they get trapped in the surgical areas.
- For the first 1-2 days you will be on a modified diet of soft foods: ice cream, milkshakes (no straw), yogurt, pudding, smoothies (no berries/no straw), jello, popsicles, broth, puree soup, apple sauce.
- By the 3rd day you can add soft nutritious foods like eggs, soft bread, mashed potatoes, soft meats, pasta, rice, cooked vegetables and fruit to your diet.
- You can return to a normal diet after one week if the surgical area feels comfortable.

## 8. Sedation and Anesthesia

If you had oral or IV sedation;

- Your concentration, balance, coordination, and judgement may be impaired for many hours after anesthesia.
- Plan to have a responsible adult with you for 24 hours after surgery.
- Do not operate a car or any type of vehicle or machinery the next 24 hours.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages. You may be more sensitive to the intoxicating effects of alcohol for the next 24 hours.
- Avoid making important legal or financial decisions; you may not be able to think clearly for the next 24 hours.