

## **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

Sometimes the after effects of oral surgery are quite minimal, so not all of the instruction may apply to you. 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 203.234.3900.

### **DAY OF SURGERY**

**FIRST HOUR:** Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change them for the first hour unless the bleeding is not controlled. The packs may be gently removed after one hour. If active bleeding persists, place enough new gauze to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 30 minutes. The gauze may then be changed as necessary (typically every 30-45 minutes). It is best to moisten the gauze with tap water and loosely fluff for comfortable positioning.

**EXERCISE CARE:** Do not disturb the area today. Do NOT rinse vigorously or probe the area with any objects. You may brush your teeth gently. **PLEASE SO NOT SMOKE** for at least 48 hours. Smoking is very detrimental to healing and can cause a dry socket.

**OOZING:** Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal. Bleeding may be controlled by placing a fresh piece of gauze over the area and biting on the gauze for 30-45 minutes.

**PERSISTANT BLEEDING:** Bleeding should never be severe. If so, it usually means that the gauze pack is not exerting enough pressure on the surgical site. Try repositioning the packs. If bleeding persists or becomes heavy you may substitute a tea bag (soaked in water, squeezed to a damp-dry and wrapped in moist gauze) for 20 to 30 minutes. If bleedings remains uncontrolled, please call our office.

**SWELLING:** Swelling is often associated with oral surgery. It can be minimized by using a cold pack, ice bag or bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied 20 minutes on and 20 minutes of for the first 24 hours. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed.

**PAIN:** Unfortunately most oral surgery is accompanied by some level of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication if the doctor deems it necessary. **If you take the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off, you should be able to manage any discomfort better.** Some patients find that stronger pain medications cause nausea, which can be reduced by preceding each dose with a small amount of food. The effects of pain medications vary widely among individuals. The most severe pain is usually within 6 hours after the local anesthetic wears off. After this the pain should lessen along with the amount of medication needed to control it. **If you find you are taking large amounts of pain medicine at frequent intervals, please call the office. If you anticipate needing more prescription medication before the weekend, you must call during the business hours to request a refill. PLEASE NOTE: renewals for narcotic pain killers must be requested during office hours and may require you to come in a pick up the prescription**

**NAUSEA:** Nausea is not uncommon after surgery. Sometimes pain medications are the cause. Increasing consumption of clear fluids and minimizing pain medication doses may help relieve symptoms. If nausea persists please call us.

**DIET:** Eating nourishing foods that do not disturb the area will help reduce healing time. Avoid extremely hot food. Do not use a straw for the first few days after the surgery. It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required to confine the first days intake to liquid's or pureed foods (soup, yogurt, pudding, milk, shakes, etc.). It is best to avoid foods like nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc., which may get lodged in the sockets. You may gradually return to your normal diet at a pace that is comfortable for you. **DO NOT SKIP MEALS!** If you are diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits and follow instructions given by the doctor.

**SHARP EDGES:** If you feel hard or sharp edges in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling the bony walls that once supported the extracted tooth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may work themselves out during the first week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort call the office.

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS**

**MOUTH RINSES:** Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential. Use ½ teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of warm water and gently rinse using small portions at a time, taking 5 minutes to rinse with the full glass. Repeat as often as you'd like, but at least two or three times daily.

**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:** Normally healing after a tooth extraction should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there is usually swelling. On the third day you should be more comfortable and although still sore, can usually begin a normal diet. The remainder of the post-operative course should show gradual, steady improvement. If you do not see improvement, please call.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about progress please call the office. A 24-hour answering service is available to contact the doctor directly.