



INSTRUCTIONS FOR POST-SURGICAL PATIENTS

Please follow instructions as written. They will add to your comfort and hasten your recovery.

1. **CONTROL OF BLEEDING:** Bite on the pressure pads continuously for 30 minutes. Wash hands and remove the gauze pressure pads and take your first medications with clear liquids. **DO NOT** change the gauze any more often than every 30 minutes. Final removal of gauze pads may coincide with the disappearance of the numbness of the local anesthesia. Take the gauze out when sleeping, eating, or drinking fluids. When bleeding has slowed or is minimal, remove the gauze and leave it out.

2. THINGS NOT TO DO FOR THE FIRST 24 HOURS:

- a) No smoking for at least 48 hours. This will lessen your likelihood of developing a dry socket.
- b) No use of straws.
- c) No hot liquids (lukewarm coffee, tea or soup is fine).
- d) No vigorous rinsing with mouthwash or water (mild swishing is okay).
- e) No spitting – wipe saliva from your lips with tissue.

**DO NOT USE GAUZE
LONGER THAN 6 HOURS
AFTER SURGERY**

Any of the above can cause increased bleeding after surgery. Some bleeding following oral surgery is to be expected. You will notice oozing for 24 to 48 hours following the surgery. Gentle pressure applied over the surgical areas by biting on gauze pads will decrease the bleeding.

3. **DIET:** Please eat something as soon as you arrive at home. Soft cold foods should be eaten for the first 24 hours. Examples: ice cream, pudding, yogurt, milkshakes, and cold liquids. Do not skip meals and keep your fluid intake up. Sucking on ice chips or crushed ice will help to thin out this saliva and also keeps the surgery site cold and helps reduce swelling. The following day chewing soft foods will help prevent muscular stiffness, and you will feel better if you are well nourished. Examples of a soft but chewable diet are spaghetti, macaroni, casseroles, and scrambled eggs. Avoid hard, crisp foods such as raw vegetables and potato chips. Avoid sucking on a straw for the first 5 days.

4. **POSTURE AND POSITION:** From the time you arrive home following surgery until bedtime, try to remain in a semi-reclined well-propped-up position. Patients who received general anesthetic should have close observation for at least the first day. Children under six should remain awake for one hour after surgery. No driving for 24 hours.

5. **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:** Avoid all physical exertion or exercise the day of surgery. Get plenty of rest the first 24 - 48 hours.

6. **SWELLING:** Swelling of the face following oral surgery is to be expected and is normal. You may help prevent and decrease the swelling by the proper use of **ice packs for 24 to 48 hours**. Apply the ice pack to your face for 15 minutes and then remove it for 15 minutes. Repeat the sequence over and over. Swelling may last for five to seven days. **A heating pad may produce symptomatic relief and reduction of swelling when used after 48 hours.**

7. **ORAL HYGIENE:** Do not brush your teeth or rinse your mouth vigorously for 12 hours following surgery. Carefully avoid the surgical areas for one week. You must keep your mouth clean starting the day after surgery by using a soft tooth brush and rinsing with ½ teaspoon of salt in an 8-ounce glass of lukewarm water four times a day. **DO NOT** rinse vigorously because it may dislodge the blood clot that has formed in the socket. Rinsing will help flush away food particles which may be lodged around the surgery site. You have been provided with an irrigation syringe. One week following the surgery you may fill the syringe with lukewarm water and flush the surgical sites to remove food particles that may be lodged in the socket after eating. If given prescription mouth rinse, use per instructions on bottle.

8. **PRESCRIPTIONS:** The prescriptions for medication are given for a specific purpose. Take them according to the instructions. **DO NOT** let anyone else take your medications. Take all antibiotics (if prescribed) until they are gone. Remember **NO** driving for eight hours after taking prescription pain medicines.

9. **STITCHES (SUTURES):** If sutures were placed, they were used for control of bleeding and to hasten healing. These sutures will dissolve and fall out about the 2nd to 14th day following surgery. If non-dissolving sutures were used, you will have been given an appointment for their removal.

10. **C-PAP:** If you have been advised by your doctor to use a C-PAP machine, use it during your recovery to prevent respiratory complications with post-op medications. This includes sleeping during the day.

11. **TELEPHONE AND CALL POLICY:** Since the doctors share night and weekend emergency calls, the doctor that did your surgery may or may not be the doctor to return your emergency call. Please limit your after-hours and weekend calls to those of a true emergency nature such as prolonged, uncontrolled bleeding, allergic reactions, temperature elevation of 101° that persists for 24 hours, or repeated nausea and vomiting. If an emergency develops, you can always reach one of the doctors through the answering service (503) 375-2000.