

Periodontal Surgery Post-Operative Instructions

- Pain:** Following all surgery there is a certain amount of discomfort. This discomfort will normally occur during the first 6-12 hours after surgery. Thereafter, it will taper off until it becomes only soreness. Taking Ibuprofen (Advil, Nuprin) 2-3 tablets every four hours for the first day or two is good to start with. Often, a prescription pain medication is sent with the patient to cover any pain the Ibuprofen does not. The pain medication should be taken as prescribed every four- six hours as needed for the pain, as long as there are no adverse reactions (itching, redness, etc.). If the pain medication is not fully effective, please call.
- Bleeding:** A small amount of trace bleeding will often occur for the first few hours after surgery. It will appear to be more than there actually is, due to mixture with saliva.
- Occasionally, the bleeding will be significant enough to fill the mouth after 30 seconds or so. Pressure with a moistened tea bag in the area for 20-30 minutes will stop most bleeding. If not, call the office.
- Avoid sucking through a straw for the first 24 hours.
- Swelling:** Swelling is uncommon, but can occur (usually in the lower). It is a delayed reaction and will peak 1-2 days after surgery. Ice packs on the surgical site off and on every 15 minutes for the first 2-3 hours will reduce both pain and swelling. If swelling is more than you think is normal, call the office.
- Dressing:** The “bubble gum” like dressing will harden after the first hour. It will usually stay in place for the first 2-3 days. It is for protection and comfort. If it should come off or become bothersome and need to be taken off, everything will heal normally without it.
- Brushing and Flossing:** Try to avoid brushing or flossing the surgical site for the first week. You can expect the stitches to dissolve in 1-2 weeks. You may resume brushing with a soft brush or Q-tip as comfort allows.
- Often a mouth rinse will be prescribed to help reduce plaque accumulation while brushing is being avoided. The rinse is best used after breakfast and before bedtime. Try to avoid eating or drinking anything after rinsing, since it will wash away the mint flavor and leave a metallic taste. Using the rinse for a week or less will minimize tooth stain. This can be polished off at a cleaning appointment if it does occur.
- Things to Expect:** As the surgical site heals, changes may occur. The position of the gum line often will be different. Some procedures are designed to reduce pockets and the result is a longer-feeling tooth. Because of the new position of the gum there is more tooth surface exposed. This new tooth surface is often sensitive to temperature or sweet foods. This is common and will fade with time.

Eating: Eating will be slow for the first few days. The best thing to begin with is food that is soft, cool and bland. Spicy or thermally hot food or drinks can stimulate bleeding. Soft foods are much easier to chew.

Good examples of food to begin with are scrambled eggs (provided cholesterol is not a problem), cottage cheese, soft cereals (oatmeal, etc.), mashed potatoes, soups that have cooled and casseroles. As time goes on (usually 2-3 days) more solid foods can be introduced.

If you had IV sedation: You may feel sleepy or relaxed, avoid any activity for the rest of the day; take it easy. For your safety, avoid drinking, signing legal documents and working for the next 12-24 hours.

Take Ibuprofen as Follows:

- 400 mg as needed for discomfort, not to exceed four doses per day.
- 400 mg four times a day for two days, then as need for discomfort.
Take prescribed pain medication as needed and directed.
- 400 mg four times a day for four days, then as needed for discomfort.
Take prescribed pain medication as needed and directed.

Last given: _____

Please call if you have any questions and concerns:

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