

## Oral Surgery Post-Operative Instructions

Thank you for visiting us today for your surgical needs. Your treatment continues until your healing is complete. In the event that your post-operative course is marked by excesses of pain, swelling, or hemorrhage, do not wait until your next appointment. Please call us at 726-8272 and we will arrange for emergency service, if necessary.

### Things To Expect

**Swelling:** This is normal following a surgical procedure in the mouth. It should reach its maximum in 24 to 48 hours and diminish by the fourth post-operative day.

**Discomfort:** The most discomfort you will experience will be during the period when sensation returns to your mouth. Make sure to take your medication(s) as soon after surgery as possible to reduce discomfort. You will notice a reduction of discomfort as swelling subsides during the next few days.

**Bleeding:** Minor bleeding, or “oozing” for the first 12 to 24 hours is to be expected

### Things To Do

**For Bleeding:** Bite on the cotton sponge placed in your mouth at the end of the procedure for at least one hour. If bleeding is more than slight, follow these directions: use gauze to remove excess blood clot AROUND the surgical site. Place one or two dampened gauze over the bleeding area only! Hold this pack in place firmly for 20 minutes so prevent blood from escaping. Repeat this procedure as necessary. Call if bleeding persists.

**For Swelling:** The swelling expected is in proportion to the surgery involved. Any swelling may be minimized by the use of ice or cold packs as soon as possible after your surgery. Apply ice to the side of the face of the operative site. Place pack on your face for fifteen minutes then remove for five minutes. Continue in this fashion for a few hours. Prolonged use of ice after that time is of little or no value. Please prop your head up while sleeping to avoid excessive blood pressure in the surgical area.

**Diet:** You should be able to drink after one hour. A liquid or soft diet, high in protein, may be necessary for the first two days. This would include soups, soft drinks, cereals, mashed potatoes, instant breakfast, eggnog, etc. During that time your fluid intake should equal, or exceed, 2 QUARTS PER DAY.

**Medication(s):** It is essential that you take all medications as directed. They have been prescribed to control pain and prevent infection.

**Mouth Rinsing:** Do not rinse on the day of your surgery. Rinsing your mouth with warm salt water – one teaspoon to 8 oz of warm water – following meals is advisable after the first 24 hours. This will speed healing by maintaining a clean surgical site.

### Things Not To Do

Do not apply heat to your face at any time! This will dramatically increase swelling!

Avoid spitting, smoking, or sucking on straws. This creates negative pressure in the mouth and tends to remove the blood clot essential to proper healing and promotes hemorrhaging from the site.

Avoid strenuous physical activity for at least 24 hours. This includes any sport in which you may become winded. Physical activity will cause your blood pressure to rise and may cause hemorrhaging to begin.

**Impacted Teeth:**

The removal of impacted teeth is quite different than the extraction of erupted teeth. The following conditions are not uncommon with their removal:

- Difficulty in opening your mouth
- Pain while swallowing
- Earache on either side

If an impacted lower tooth was removed you may have numbness of the lower lip on that side. This is ALMOST always a temporary condition. It is not disfiguring, just annoying. It may last a few days to many months but sensation should return in time.

Your adjacent teeth may realign themselves after surgery causing some discomfort.

Sores may develop at the corners of your mouth. These should be covered with a mild ointment – preferably non-petroleum based.

This is a general review of what you might expect during the healing phase of your treatment. Do not hesitate to call if you have any questions that have not been answered.

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