

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. ACTIVITY: After leaving the office, relax for the remainder of the day. Avoid strenuous activity for several days.

2. SWELLING: Some swelling may be present the day after the surgery and may peak at 48-72 hours after surgery. Rinsing with cold liquids is very important for reducing swelling, discomfort, and bleeding. Sip ice water, iced tea, frozen yogurt, milkshakes, or similar cold liquids and keep the surgical area cold for the remainder of the day after surgery. Do not use a straw, as suction can start bleeding. Swelling for surgeries in the lower jaw can also be minimized by placing an ice pack over the operated area on the outside of the face for the remainder of the day after surgery alternating on and off at 10 minute intervals.

3. DISCOMFORT AND MEDICATIONS: Periodontal surgery, like other surgical procedures, may be associated with varying degrees of discomfort. This depends on the procedure involved and individual differences. If analgesics have been prescribed, it is usual to take the first dose while the surgical site is still anesthetized (“numb”). All medication should be taken strictly as prescribed. The interval between taking the medications and the total length of time that you are to remain on your medications has been carefully determined to give you the maximum benefit with the minimum use of drugs. Variation from the prescribed regime can affect healing and the success of your procedure.

4. BLEEDING: You may notice slight bleeding from the surgical site. This type of minor bleeding for one or two days is not unusual and is not a major concern. If at any time you notice the formation of large blood clots or any obvious flow of blood which is more than light ooze, notify your doctor at once.

5. SUTURES: Sutures (“stitches”) are placed to hold the gingival tissues in the proper position for ideal healing. If sutures (“stitches”) were placed, your doctor will usually want you to return so that they can be fully removed once sufficient healing has occurred. **Do not disturb the sutures with your tongue, toothbrush or in any other manner since displacement will impair healing.** If you notice that a suture has come out or come loose, notify your doctor during regular office hours.

6. DRESSING: A periodontal dressing is often used to cover the surgical site for one to two weeks after surgery. The dressing is placed around your teeth to protect the surgical area and should not be disturbed. If small pieces become lost, and you have no discomfort, there is no cause for concern. If large pieces break off or the entire dressing becomes loose in the first 2-4 days, please contact the dentist.

7. DIET: For your comfort and to protect the surgical area, a soft diet is recommended. Avoid chewing in the area of surgery. Avoid hard/crispy, fibrous, spicy or “sharp” foods (such as corn chips) as these may be uncomfortable and can dislodge the periodontal dressing. **Drink plenty of liquids.** It is important to maintain a diet with a normal calorie level that is high in protein, minerals and vitamins to support post-operative healing. Eat as normal a diet as possible.

8. ORAL HYGIENE: Continue to brush and floss the teeth that were NOT involved in the surgery (or covered by the periodontal dressing) the day after surgery. **The surgical area should not be**

disturbed for the first week or two postoperatively. However, you may rinse gently with salt water. After your sutures have been removed, generally after 1-2 weeks, you should lightly clean the teeth using a soft toothbrush or as instructed by your doctor. The gentle application of a fluoride gel with your toothbrush will also help to control plaque.

9. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: Avoid strenuous physical activity during your immediate recovery period, usually 2 to 3 days.

10. SMOKING: All smoking should be stopped until after your sutures have been removed to ensure the best healing and success of your surgical procedure. Healing results are significantly worse in smokers than in nonsmokers.

11. ALCOHOL: All intake of alcohol should be stopped until after your sutures have been removed and minimized for the next several weeks after suture removal to enhance healing. The combination of alcohol and certain pain medication is not recommended.

12. DO NOT'S": For the next several days, do NOT spit, smoke, rinse hard, drink through a straw, create a "sucking" action in your mouth, use a commercial mouthwash, drink carbonated soda, or use an oral irrigating device.