

## Surgical Postoperative Instructions

**Bleeding** • Remove the gauze from your mouth one hour following treatment and repack the wound for an additional hour if it is still bleeding; oozing may continue for several hours. Spitting makes bleeding worse. If after 4 hours, bleeding is still a problem, do as follows:

- a) Wipe mouth thoroughly
- b) Place folded piece of sterile gauze or a tea bag over the area and bite down for one hour. Repeat if necessary. The gauze should be thick enough to prevent the teeth from coming together. All pressure should be upon the bleeding area.
- c) Sit or semi-recline. Do not move around.
- d) Try not to spit, chew, or talk for one hour.

**Pain** • If you received a prescription for pain medication; take it as needed with food. If pain is only slight, take two Tylenol or Advil every 3-4 hours.

**Swelling** • Swelling is normal after oral surgery and can be minimized by immediately placing an ice pack on the outside of the face directly over the surgical area—5 minutes on and 5 minutes off—for 8-12 hours after surgery.

**Sutures** • If you required sutures, they are most likely dissolving sutures. You should expect them to become loose and fall out between 3 and 10 (in some cases 21-28 days) days after the operation as the extraction site heals. Generally speaking, you do not need to come back to the office to have sutures removed.

**Mouth Rinsing** • Beginning the day after surgery, rinse mouth with luke-warm salt water (one teaspoon of salt to a cup of water). Rinse 4-5 times daily, especially after meals, for the next 10-14 days.

**Tooth Brushing** • Good oral hygiene is essential to post-op recovery. Do not be afraid to brush your teeth. Do avoid brushing the surgical site, however, as this may tear the stitches. Instead, use warm salt water rinsing to keep the surgical area free of bacteria.

**Diet** • It is important to maintain an adequate intake of soft foods and fluids. Try fruit juices, milk shakes, ice cream, yogurt, and eggs. Avoid alcohol, smoking, and drinking through a straw for at least 48 hours, but especially on the day of surgery. Call this office if you are in doubt about anything connected with your surgery, or if you develop severe pain, persistent fever, bodily illness or any other unusual disturbances.

**Post-Operative Complications** • In about 10% of cases, patients may experience a phenomenon known as “dry socket.” Dry socket usually appears 3-7 days after procedure and is characterized by an unusual and persistent pain, a foul taste and malodor in the mouth. It is important to know that this is not an infection, but does require attention by your doctor. It is easily treated. Please call the office immediately if any of these signs or symptoms become evident.

**Do not drive or operate machinery for 12 hours after receiving general anesthesia or sedation or after taking prescription pain medication.**

A postoperative appointment is necessary.

Please return to our office on: (Date) \_\_\_\_\_