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## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### PAIN

Discomfort following oral surgery usually begins when the local anesthetic diminishes. We recommend starting pain control as soon as possible to stay ahead of the discomfort. Studies have shown taking 400mg of Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) along with 500mg of Acetaminophen (extra strength Tylenol) every 6 hours is highly effective in pain control. Patients can also benefit from placing Orajel or Anbesol on a small gauze and applying it to the surgical area.

### MEDICATION

When taking narcotic pain medication or sedatives you should not drive a car, use dangerous equipment, drink alcohol, or assume critical responsibilities. You should not drive a car for 24 hours after receiving an IV anesthetic. **It is important to take and finish the prescribed antibiotic as ordered.** Notify the surgeon if a complication arises while taking any prescription drug. Please be aware that Penicillin, as well as other common forms of antibiotics, may reduce the effectiveness of oral contraceptives. You should consider another form of birth control while taking these medications.

### SWELLING

This is common after oral surgery and may continue to increase during the first 24 to 72 hours. During the first 48 hours cold compresses or ice bags may be applied to the affected areas, 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off to minimize the swelling. Starting on the 3rd post-operative day, warm compresses can be used to facilitate resolution of the swelling.

### BLEEDING

Some oozing of blood is normal during the first 24 hours following oral surgery. If there is a persistent ooze, moisten gauze packs with cold water, place over site and bite down with firm steady pressure for 30 minutes. Continue this procedure every 30 minutes until the flow of blood stops.

### CAUTION: DO NOT SLEEP WITH GAUZE IN THE MOUTH

The presence of bloody saliva without active bleeding is no cause for alarm.

Do not smoke or drink with a straw for one week following surgery. These things could disturb the blood clot formation.

### ORAL HYGIENE

Keeping your mouth clean is essential after surgery. Gently brush teeth and floss as needed, avoiding the surgical areas. After the first 24 hours gently rinse with a mild salt water solution, 1/4 teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8 ounce glass of water. Repeat 3-4 times daily and after meals. Diluted mouthwash can be used for a soft rinse. Avoid vigorous rinsing and spitting during the first 48 hours.

### RETAINERS

Retainers should be worn as soon as possible, based on your comfort level, unless otherwise instructed.

## **DIET**

Food intake is generally regulated by the comfort of chewing. **Soft foods** and **plenty of fluids** are highly recommended. Avoid foods that are hard, brittle, hot or spicy for 5-7 days. Do not drink from a straw for one week.

## **ACTIVITY**

After an IV anesthetic you should have someone stay with you at home for at least 12 hours. Care should be taken to minimize the risk of falling and injuring yourself, particularly on stairs or in the bathroom. Bed rest during the first 24 hours will minimize pain, swelling and bleeding. Over exertion may initiate or intensify pain. Avoid excessive physical activity at work, school or play.

### **The following anticipated situations should cause no concern:**

- Slight oozing of blood for the first 24 hours
- Swelling which occurs during the first 1-3 days
- Moderate discomfort which can be controlled by pain medication
- Discoloration or bruising of the skin of the face around the surgical site
- A slight elevation of temperature during the first 24 hours

### **The doctor should be contacted if any of the following complications arise:**

- Severe, uncontrollable bleeding
- Severe, uncontrollable pain
- Swelling which begins after the first 72 hours following surgery
- A considerable spike in temperature
- A skin rash develops
- Any situation which is not covered by these instructions and you feel should need attention

**Following these instructions will assist you, however if you have any questions please contact our office, Monday through Friday, 8:45am-5:00pm.**

**If an emergency arises after hours,  
please call our answering service at 586-693-8333.**