

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING IMPLANT SURGERY

DAY OF SURGERY

FIRST HOUR: Bite down gently but firmly on the gauze packs that have been placed over the surgical areas, making sure they remain in place. Do not change them for the 30 minutes unless the bleeding is not controlled. The gauze may be gently removed after 30 minutes. If active bleeding persists, place a new gauze or moist tea bag over the implant site and bite down to obtain pressure over the surgical site for another 30 minutes. The gauze may then be changed as necessary (**typically every 20 to 30 minutes until active bleeding has stopped and the gauze has a pink color**). It is best to moisten the gauze or tea bag with tap water prior to positioning. **DO NOT SMOKE** for at least four weeks following surgery. We recommend that you **STOP SMOKING COMPLETELY**.

EXERCISE CARE: Do not disturb the surgical area. **DO NOT** probe the area with any objects. You may brush your teeth gently. **PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE**. Please refrain from strenuous activity for 3 days.

OOZING: Intermittent bleeding or oozing overnight is normal. Bleeding may be controlled by placing fresh gauze or tea bags over the areas and biting on the gauze or tea bags for 30-45 minutes at a time.

PERSISTENT BLEEDING: Bleeding should never be severe or excessive. If so, it usually means that the packs are being clenched between teeth only and are not exerting pressure on the surgical areas. Try repositioning the packs and verify they are over the implant site and not between the teeth. If bleeding remains uncontrolled, please call our office. **Do not leave gauze in your mouth while sleeping, eating or drinking**. But do place a towel across your pillow to help catch any small amount of blood that may come out while laying down.

SWELLING: Swelling is often associated with oral surgery. It can be minimized by using a cold pack, ice bag or a bag of frozen peas wrapped in a towel and applied firmly to the cheek adjacent to the surgical area. This should be applied twenty minutes on and twenty minutes off during the first 12 to 24 hours after surgery. **DO NOT APPLY ICE AFTER THE FIRST 24 HOURS AS THIS MAY CAUSE JAW MUSCLES TO TIGHTEN**. If you have been prescribed medicine for the control of swelling, be sure to take it as directed.

PAIN: Unfortunately most oral surgery is accompanied by some degree of discomfort. You will usually have a prescription for pain medication. **If you take the first pill before the anesthetic has worn off, you should be able to manage any discomfort better**. Some patients find that stronger pain medicine causes nausea, but if you precede each pain pill with a small amount of food, chances for nausea will be reduced. The effects of pain medications vary widely among individuals. Some patients may even require two of the pain pills at one time. Remember that the most severe pain is usually the first six to twelve hours after the local anesthetic wears off; afterwards, your need for medicine should lessen, but significant soreness is normal for the first two to three days following surgery. **If you find you are taking large amounts of pain medicine at frequent intervals, please call our office. If you anticipate needing more prescription medication for the weekend, please call for a refill during weekday business hours.**

NAUSEA: Nausea is not uncommon after surgery. Sometimes pain medications are the cause. Nausea can be reduced by preceding each pain pill with a small amount of soft food, and taking the pill with a large volume of water. Try to keep taking clear fluids and minimize dosing of pain medications, but call us if you do not feel better. Classic Coca Cola or other carbonated drinks may help with nausea.

DIET: Eat any nourishing food that can be taken with comfort. Avoid extremely hot foods. It is sometimes advisable, but not absolutely required, to confine the first day's intake to liquids or pureed foods (soups, puddings, yogurt, milk shakes, etc.) It is best to avoid foods such as nuts, sunflower seeds, popcorn, etc. Over the next several days you may gradually progress to solid foods. It is important not to skip meals! If you take nourishment regularly you will feel better, gain strength, have less discomfort and heal faster. If you are a diabetic, maintain your normal eating habits or follow instructions given by your doctor.

SHARP EDGES: If you feel something hard or have sharp edges in the surgical areas, it is likely you are feeling the bony walls which once supported the extracted teeth. Occasionally small slivers of bone may

work themselves out during the following week or so. If they cause concern or discomfort, please call the office.

SUTURES: If sutures were placed, they will likely dissolve in approximately one week. However, if the doctor placed a non-dissolving suture, it will be removed at your next post-operative appointment, typically 2 weeks after your surgery.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SECOND AND THIRD DAYS

MOUTH RINSES: Keeping your mouth clean after surgery is essential as it will help ensure your steady recovery. Use 1/4 teaspoon of salt dissolved in an 8-10 ounce glass of warm water and gently rinse with portions of the solution. If prescribed an oral mouth rinse, use the rinse instead of salt water.

BRUSHING: Begin your normal oral hygiene routine as soon as possible after surgery. Brush at least twice per day. Soreness and swelling may not permit vigorous brushing, but please make every effort to clean your teeth within the bounds of comfort.

HOT APPLICATIONS: After the first two days, you may apply warm compresses to the skin over the areas of swelling (hot water bottle, hot moist towels, heating pad) for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off to help soothe tender areas and loosen tight muscles. This will also help decrease stiffness.

HEALING: Normal healing after implant surgery should be as follows: The first two days after surgery are generally the most uncomfortable and there is usually some swelling. On the third day, you should be more comfortable and, although still swollen, can usually begin a more substantial diet. **The remainder of the post-operative course should be punctuated by gradual, steady improvement.** If you don't see continued improvement, please call our office.

It is our desire that your recovery be as smooth and pleasant as possible. Following these instructions will assist you, but if you have questions about your progress, please call our office at 303-663-7890. A 24-hour answering service is available to contact the doctor on call after hours. Calling during office hours will afford a faster response to your question or concern.