



**POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS
PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

Care of the mouth after surgery has an important effect on healing. Swelling, discomfort, slight oozing of blood and restricted jaw movement may be expected, depending on the extent and location of surgery. These problems need not cause alarm and may be minimized if the following post-operative instructions are followed carefully.

BLEEDING

IT IS NOT UNUSUAL TO HAVE SLIGHT OOZING FOR 24 HOURS AND PERIODIC BREAKTHROUGH BLEEDING FOR 10 DAYS AFTER A SURGICAL PROCEDURE.

A folded gauze sponge has been placed in the area of surgery prior to your leaving the office. Bite on it with constant firm pressure. After 20 minutes remove the gauze. If there is continued bleeding, place a new gauze. Repeat every 20 minutes until bleeding has stopped. Do not place a large bulky gauze pack for it will only put pressure on the nearby teeth, and not in the area of bleeding. Do not replace the gauze if there is only slight oozing. Avoid spitting and rinsing your mouth on the day of surgery.

REMEMBER, a drop or two of blood mixed with saliva may seem like a mouth full of blood. Place a towel on your pillow to prevent staining of your linen with blood, which will be in your saliva for several hours. FIRM BITING, PRESSURE and a CORRECTLY PLACED gauze pack on the surgical area is the most effective means of stopping bleeding.

SWELLING

Swelling will be at its greatest 2 days after surgery, then the swelling will slowly disappear. To minimize swelling, apply an ice bag to the operated side of the face as soon as you arrive home. Apply cold for 20 minutes, then off for 10 minutes. Continue for 2 - 3 hours.

PAIN

Discomfort (or severe pain after any difficult or prolonged surgery) should be expected. Medication will be prescribed to make you comfortable. Severe pain lasting for more than 3 days is not normal. Come in or call if this happens. Remember, after a pain medication is swallowed, it may take an hour to take effect and only work for 3 to 4 hours. It is therefore, important to try to keep ahead of anticipated pain. The full dose of pain medication every 3 - 4 hours will be much more beneficial than smaller amounts taken more frequently.

CARE OF THE MOUTH

Do not rinse your mouth the day of surgery. This may dislodge the blood clot and interrupt the normal course of healing. The morning after surgery, rinse gently with very warm salt water (1/2 tsp. of salt in a glass of warm water). Repeat every few hours, especially after meals, for the next 3 - 4 days.

DIET

Eat whatever you wish. You may prefer soft or liquid foods for your own comfort. Avoid foods that require hard chewing. It is very important to maintain a good dietary intake even if it is only liquids. Avoid straws.

NAUSEA

Nausea may accompany the discomfort during initial post-operative period. Small sips of tea, 7-up, or gingerale may help.

SMOKING

No smoking for 24 hours.

POST-OPERATIVE CONDITIONS

The following post-operative conditions may occur in some patients while healing is progressing normally.

1. Swelling on one or both sides of the jaw;
2. Numbness (parasthesia) around the corner of the mouth or tongue;
3. Tightness of the muscles (trismus) may cause difficulty in opening the mouth;
4. Slight earache or sore throat;
5. Skin may become discolored a few days after the operation;
6. When intravenous anesthesia medication is give by vein, you may experience tenderness, discoloration, or hardening of the vein at the injection site.

Please keep in mind that it is reasonable to expect your normal activities to be disrupted following a surgical procedure.

DENTURE PATIENTS

Do not remove for 24 hours after surgery.

NOTE: In case of problems, or if you have any questions, contact this office. Please try to anticipate prescription refills or care problems during regular office hours.

Next appointment _____ at _____ a.m. p.m.

Signature of person responsible for taking patient home and giving these instructions: _____